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BOOK THE THIRD.

LETTERS OF THE PRESENT CENTURY, AND OF LATE DATE.

SECTION II.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Dr. Swift to Miss Jane Waryng *.

Madam, Dublin, May 4, 1700.

I AM extremely concerned at the account you give of your health; for my uncle told me he found you in appearance better than you had been in some years; and I was in hopes you had still continued so. God forbid I should ever be the occasion of creating more troubles to you, as you seem to intimate! The letter you desired me to answer, I have frequently read, and thought I had replied to every part of it that required: however, since you are pleased to repeat those particulars wherein you desire satisfaction, I shall endeavour to give it you as well as I am able. You would know what gave my temper that sudden turn, as to alter the style of my letters since I last came over. If there has been that alteration you observe, I have told you the cause abundance of times. I had used a thousand endeavours and arguments to get you from the company and place you are in; both on the account of your health and humour, which I thought were like to suffer very much in such an air, and before such examples. All I had in answer from you was nothing but a great deal of arguing, and sometimes in a style so very imperious as I thought might have been spared, when I reflected how much you had been in the wrong. The other thing you would know is, whether this change of style be owing to the thoughts of a new mistress. I declare, upon the word of a Christian and a gentleman, it is not; neither had I ever thoughts of being married to any other person but yourself. I had ever an opinion that you had a great sweetness of nature and humour; and whatever appeared to the contrary, I looked upon it only as a thing put on as necessary before a lover: but I have since observed in abundance of your letters such marks of a severe indifference, that I began to think it was hardly possible for one of my few good qualities to please you. I never knew any so hard to be worked upon, even in matters where the interest and concern are entirely your own: all which, I say, passed easily while we were in the state of formalities and ceremony; but since that, there is no other way of accounting for this untractable behaviour in you, but by imputing it to a want of common esteem and friendship for me.

When I desired an account of your fortune, I had no such design as you pretend to imagine. I have told you many a time, that in England it was in the

* This letter, Mr. Faulkner says, was written "to a lady of family in the north of Ire-"land;" and he adds, that it was "supposed "to be previous to Dr. Swift's acquaintance "with Stella." It was written not long before the time of Stella's fixing her residence in Ireland.

power of any young fellow of common sense to get a larger fortune than ever you pretended to. I asked, in order to consider whether it were sufficient, with the help of my poor income, to make one of your humour easy in a married state. I think it comes to almost a hundred pounds a year; and I think at the same time, that no young woman in the world of the same income would dwindle away her health and life in such a sink, and among such family conversation: neither have all your letters been once able to persuade that you have the least value for me, because you so little regarded what I so often said upon that matter. The dismal account you say I have given you of my livings *, I can assure you to be a true one; and, since it is a dismal one even in your own opinion, you can best draw consequences from it. The place where Dr. Bolton† lived is upon a living which he keeps with the deanery; but the place of residence for that they have given me, is within a mile of a town called Trim, twenty miles from hence; and there is no other way, but to hire a house at Trim, or build one on the spot: the first is hardly to be done, and the other I am too poor to perform at present. For coming down to Belfast, it's what I cannot yet think of, my attendance is so close, and so much required of me; but our government sits very loose, and I believe will change in a few months; whether our part‡ will partake in the change, I know not, though I am very apt to believe it; and then I shall be at leisure for a short journey. But I hope your other friends, more powerful than I, will before that time persuade you from the place where you are. I desire my service to your mother, in return for her remembrance: but for any other dealings that way, I entreat your pardon: and I think I have more cause to resent your desires of me in that cause, than you have to be angry with my refusals. If you like such company and conduct, much good do you with them! my education has been otherwise. My uncle Adam § asked me one day in private, as by direction, what my designs were in relation to you, because it might be a hindrance to you if I did not proceed. The answer I gave him (which I suppose he has sent you) was to this effect:—"That I hoped I was no hindrance to "you; because the reason you urged "against an union with me was drawn "from your indisposition, which still "continued; that you also thought my "fortune not sufficient, which is neither "at present in a condition to offer you: "That, if your health and my fortune "were as they ought, I would prefer "you above all your sex; but that, in "the present condition of both, I "thought it was against your opinion, "and would certainly make you unhappy: That, had you any other offers "which your friends or yourself thought "more to your advantage, I should "think I were very unjust to be an obstacle in your way." Now for what concerns my fortune, you have answered it. I desire, therefore, you will let me know if your health be otherwise than it was when you told me the doctors advised you against marriage, as what would certainly hazard your life. Are they or you grown of another opinion in this particular? Are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than three hundred pounds a year? Have you such an inclination to my person and humour, as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? Will you be ready to engage in those methods I shall direct for the improvement of your mind, so as to make

* Those of Laracor and Rathbeggin.

† This gentleman, as well as Dr. Swift, was chaplain to Lord Berkeley when one of the Lords Justices in Ireland; and was promoted to the deanery of Derry, which had been previously promised to Dr. Swift: but Mr. Bush, the principal secretary, for weighty reasons best known to himself, laid Dr. Swift aside, unless he would pay him a large sum; which the Doctor refused with the utmost contempt and scorn—Dr. Bolton, who was also minister of St. Werberg's, Dublin, was advanced to the bishopric of Clonfert, Sept. 12, 1722; translated to Elphin, April 16, 1724; to Cashel, Jan. 6, 1799; and died in 1744. He was one of the most eloquent speakers of his time, and was particularly skilled in ecclesiastical history.

‡ Meaning Lord Berkeley, who was then one of the three Lords Justices.—The Earl of Rochester was appointed Lord Lieutenant in September following.

§ Whose daughter, Anne, married a clergyman of the name of Perry.

us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting or visited? Can you bend your love, esteem, and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? Shall I have so much power in your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach, though provoked by a—? Have you so much good nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? Shall the place wherever your husband is thrown be more welcome than courts and cities without him? In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men who, like me, are deep read in the world; and to a person thus made, I shall be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy. These are the questions I have always resolved to propose to her with whom I meant to pass my life; and whenever you can heartily answer them in the affirmative, I shall be blessed to have you in my arms, without regarding whether your person be beautiful, or your fortune large. Cleanliness in the first and competency in the other, is all I look for. I desire indeed a plentiful revenue, but would rather it should be of my own; though I should bear from a wife to be reproached for the greatest.

I have said all I can possibly say in answer to any part of your letter, and in telling you my clear opinion as to matters between us. I singled you out at first from the rest of women; and I expect not to be used like a common lover. When you think fit to send me an answer to this without—, I shall then approve myself, by all means you shall command, Madam, your most faithful humble servant.

LETTER II.

Dr. Tillotson to the Earl of Mulgrave.

My Lord, Oct. 23, 1679.

IT was a great satisfaction to me to be anywise instrumental in the gaining of your Lordship to our religion, which I am most firmly persuaded to be the truth; but yet I am, and always was, more concerned that your Lordship should continue a virtuous and good man, than become a protestant; being assured that the ignorance and errors of mens' understandings, will find a much easier forgiveness with God than the faults of their wills. I remember your Lordship once told me, you would endeavour to justify the sincerity of your change, by a conscientious regard to all other parts and actions of your life; I am sure you cannot more effectually condemn your own act, than by being a worse man, after your professsion to have embraced a better religion. I will certainly be one of the last to believe any thing of your Lordship that is not good; but I always feared I should be among the first that should hear of it. Before the time I last waited on your Lordship, I had heard something which afflicted me very sensibly; but I hoped it was not true, and was therefore loth then to trouble your Lordship about it; but having heard the same since from those whom I believe to bear no ill-will to your Lordship, I now think it my duty to acquaint you with it. To speak plainly, I have been told that your Lordship is of late fallen into a conversation dangerous both to your reputation and virtue, two of the tenderest and dearest things in the world. I believe your Lordship to have great command and conduct of yourself, but am very sensible of human frailty, and of the dangerous temptations to which youth is exposed in this dissolute age; and therefore I earnestly beseech your Lordship to consider, besides the high provocation of Almighty God, and the hazard of your soul whenever you engage in a bad course, what a blemish you will bring upon a fair and unspotted reputation, what uneasiness and trouble you will create to yourself from the severe reflections of a guilty conscience, and how great a violence you will offer to the good principles of your nature and education, and to a mind the best made for virtuous and worthy things. And do not imagine you can stop when you please; experience shews us the contrary, and that nothing is more vain than for men to think to set bounds to themselves in any that is bad; I hope in God that no temptation hath yet prevailed upon your Lordship so far as to be guilty of any lewd act; if it have, as you love your soul, let it not proceed to a habit. The retreat is yet easy and open, but will every day become more difficult and obstructed; God is so merciful, that upon our repentance and reso-

lution of amendment, he is not only ready to forgive what is past, but to assist us by his grace to do better for the future; but I need not enforce these considerations upon a mind so capable and easy to receive good counsel; I shall only desire your Lordship to think again and again how great a point of wisdom it is in all our actions to consult the peace of our own minds, and to have no quarrel with the constant and inseparable companion of our lives. If others displease us we may quit their company; but he that is displeased at himself is unavoidably unhappy, because he hath no way to get rid of himself.

My Lord, for God's sake, and your own, think of being happy, and resolve by all means to save yourself from this untoward generation; and determine rather upon a speedy change of your condition than to gratify the inclinations of youth in any way but what is lawful and honourable; and let me have the contentment to be assured from your Lordship, either that there hath been no ground for this report, or that there shall be none for the future, which will be the welcomest news to me in the world. I have now only to beg of your Lordship to believe, that I have not done this to satisfy the formality of my profession; but that it proceeds from the truest affection and good-will that one man can possibly bear to another.

I pray God every day for your Lordship, with the same constancy and fervour of devotion as for myself; and do now more earnestly beg of him, that this counsel may be acceptable and effectual. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

Earl of Mulgrave to Dr. Tillotson.

Sir, Whitehall, March 27, 1689.

NOTHING in this world is, nor ought to be, so dear to any man, as his reputation; and consequently the defence of it is the greatest obligation that one man can lay on another: there are also some circumstances, that render this obligation yet more acceptable and valuable; as when it is conferred generously, without any self-interest, or the least desire of invitation from the person so defended. All this happens to be my case at this time; and therefore I hope you will not be surprized to find I am not the most ungrateful and insensible man living; which certainly I should be, if I did not acknowledge all your industrious concern for me about the business of the ecclesiastical commission, which now makes so much noise in the world. You have, as I am told, so cordially pleaded my cause, that it is almost become your own; and therefore, as unwilling as I am to speak of myself, especially in a business which I cannot wholly excuse, yet I think myself now a little obliged to shew my part in this matter; though imprudent enough, yet is not altogether unworthy of so just and so considerable an advocate.

The less a man says of himself, the better; and it is so well known already how I was kept out of all the secret councils, that I need not justify myself, nor trouble you as to those matters; only I appeal to the unquestionable testimony of the Spanish ambassador, if I did not zealously and constantly take all occasions to oppose the French interest; because I knew it directly opposite both to the King and kingdom's good, which are indeed things inseparable, and ought to be so accounted, as a fundamental maxim in all councils of princes.

This, I hope, will prepare the way a little for what I have to say concerning my being one of the ecclesiastical commissioners; of which error I am now as sensible as I was at first ignorant, being so unhappily conversant in the midst of a perpetual court-flattery, as never to have heard the least word of any illegality in that commission before I was unfortunately engaged in it.

For, tho' my Lord of Canterbury had very prudently refused to be of it, yet it was talked at court, it proceeded only from his unwillingness to act at that time, and not from any illegality he suspected in the commission; having excused himself from it the most respectful way, by the infirmities he lay under. Being thus ignorant of the laws, and in such a station at court, I need not desire a man of your judgment and candour to consider the hardness of my case, when I was commanded to serve in a commission with a Lord Chancellor, a Lord Chief Justice, and two Bishops, who had all of them already acted some time there, without shewing the least diffidence of their power, or any hesitation in the execution

ecution of it; and perhaps a man of more discretion than I can pretend to, might have been easily persuaded to act in such a conjunction, and to think he might do it safely, both in law and conscience: but I need not say much to shew my desire to have avoided, if possible, a troublesome employment, that had not the least temptation of honour or profit to recommend it; and which therefore I continued in upon no account in the world but to serve both king and clergy with the little ability I had, in moderating those councils, which I thought might grow higher if I left my place to be filled by any of those who waited for it greedily, in order to their ill designs.

And I may expect the more credit in this, when it is considered that the two important affairs which passed in that ecclesiastical court, being the Bishop of London's suspension, and the incapacitating the members of Magdalen college: the first was done some months before I was a commissioner; and I opposed the last, both in voting and speaking, and with all the interest I was able to make use of, which indeed was but little after that opposition; in which being outvoted, I seldom came, and never acted in that court after, except to restore the Bishop of London, though sent for continually, by reason of my lodging so near it.

And since I have been forced to mention my good-will at least, if not my service, to such learned men of the clergy, who I thought deserved it, it may be allowed me to give this one instance more of it; that although in preferring men to all other places of the household, I ever used to ask permission first, and accordingly was often refused, for the sake of Roman Catholics and others, who were recommended by persons more in favour than myself; yet I was so careful of keeping that considerable part of the family unmixed with mean or unworthy chaplains, whom others I feared would have imposed on his Majesty, that I constantly filled up those vacancies without giving him the least notice or trouble about it, and supplied them with the ablest approved divines I could possibly find, most commonly recommended to me by the bishops who were not of the court: which I conceived the most proper course, in a matter concerning clergymen, with a king of a different persuasion from theirs, and intended for his real service, believing it had been better for him, as well as the kingdom, if the greater ecclesiastical dignities had been disposed of by others with as much caution.

And thus, Sir, I have endeavoured to confirm you in your favourable opinion of me, which must be acknowledged by every body an approbation of such weight, that as I hope it may be an example of authority to many, so it is sufficient of itself to balance the censoriousness of others. I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

Dr. Lewis Atterbury to Bishop Atterbury.*

Dear Brother, April . . 1720.

It is reported that the Archdeacon [of Rochester] is dead; and I have sent my servant to inform me, whether it is so or not. I have since considered all that you said to me yesterday, and both from reason and matter of fact, still am of opinion, that there can be no just matter of exception taken.

I shall only lay down two or three instances which lie uppermost in my thoughts. Your Lordship very well knows, that Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury† had a brother for his Archdeacon; and that Sir Thomas More's father was a Puisne Judge when he was Lord Chancellor‡; and thus, in the sacred history, did God himself appoint, that the safety and advancement of the patriarchs should be procured by their younger brother; and that they, with their father, should live under the protection and government of Joseph. I in-

* Dr. Lewis Atterbury, elder brother of the Bishop, was born at Caldecot, in the parish of Newport-Pagnel, in Buckinghamshire, the second of May 1656. He was educated at Westminster School, under the celebrated Dr. Busby, between whom and our Divine's father, Dr. Lewis Atterbury, there was a friendship and intimacy.

† From 1070 till 1093.—Anschibillus was made Archdeacon in 1075.

‡ On the disgrace of Wolsey, in 1530, the great seal was intrusted to Sir Thomas More, who was the first layman that enjoyed that honour, which he resigned in 1533, and was executed in 1535. His father, Sir John, outlived him 35 years.

stance in those obvious examples, only to let your Lordship see that I have canvassed these matters in my own thoughts; and I see no reason but to depend on your kind intentions, intimated in your former letter, to your most affectionate brother, &c.

LETTER V.

Bishop Atterbury to his Brother.

Bromley, Wednesday, April .. 1720.

Dear Brother,

YOUR letter directed to Westminster found me here this morning. I hope to be at Westminster to-morrow. In the mean time you may assure yourself of any thing that is in my disposal. At present the gentleman * you mention is well, and likely to continue so. His distemper is the same as mine, though he has it in a worse degree. However, he is 16 or 17 years younger than I am, and may probably therefore outlive me. When he was in danger of late, the first person I thought of was you. But there are objections against that, in point of decency, which, I own, stick with me; and which, after I have laid them before you, you shall allow, or over-rule, as you think fit. It had been a much properer post for my nephew†, if God had pleased to spare his life. You need not mention any thing of this kind to me; for you may depend upon it, you are never out of the thoughts of your ever affectionate brother.

LETTER VI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Brother, Deanery, Tuesday Night.

I HOPE you have considered the matter of the Archdeaconry, and do at last see it in the same light that I do. I protest to you, I cannot help thinking it the most unseemly indecent thing in the world; and I am very sure the generality of those, whose opinions I regard, will be of that opinion. I was so far from apprehending that such a station, under me, would be in the least welcome to you, that I discoursed of it, and proposed it to another person‡ some time ago, and am entered very far into engagements on that head; and had you not written to me, I do frankly own, that I should never have spoken a word to you about it. Believe me, when I tell you that this is a plain state of the fact; and, should you at last come to be of my opinion, I dare say, you will not, at long run, think yourself mistaken. I am sure, I shall not be at ease till you are in some good dignity in the church; such as you, and I, and all the world, shall agree, is every way proper for you. I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Brother, May 20, 1720.

THE person, to whom I told you I had gone very far towards engaging myself for the Archdeaconry, was Dr. Brydges, § the Duke of Chandos's brother; and him I am this day going to collate to it. I hope you are convinced by what I have said and written, that nothing could have been more improper than the placing you in that post, immediately under myself. Could I have been easy under that thought, you may be sure, no man living should have had the preference to you. I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Bishop Atterbury to his Son at Oxford.

Dear Obby, [Of uncertain date.]

I THANK you for your letter, because there are manifest signs in it of your endeavouring to excel yourself, and by consequence to please me. You have succeeded in both respects, and will always succeed, if you think it worth your while to consider what you write, and to whom, and let nothing, though of a trifling nature, pass through your pen negligently: get but the way of writing correctly and justly, time and use will teach you to write readily afterwards; not but that

* Thomas Sprat, M. A. (son to the famous Bishop of that name). He was Archdeacon of Rochester; and a prebendary of Westminster, Winchester, and Rochester. He died May 10, 1720.

† Dr. Lewis Atterbury had three sons; of whom the first and second died in their infancy. The third, named Bedingfield Atterbury, was born Jan. 8, 1693, and died of the small-pox, Dec. 27, 1718.

‡ Dr Brydges. See the next letter.

§ Dr Brydges was an old and intimate acquaintance of the Bishop. He died May 9, 1723.

too

too much care may give a stiffness to your style, which ought in letters, by all means to be avoided. The turn of them should be always natural and easy, for they are an image of private and familiar conversation. I mention this with respect to the four or five first lines of yours, which have an air of poetry, and do naturally resolve themselves in blank verse. I send you the letter again, that you yourself may now make the same observation; but you took the hint of the thought from a poem; and it is no wonder therefore if you have heightened your phrase a little when you were expressing it. The rest is as it should be, and particularly there is an air of duty and sincerity in it, that, if it comes from the heart, is the most acceptable present you can make me: with these good qualities an incorrect letter would please me; and without them, the finest thoughts and language would make no lasting impression upon me. The Great Being says (you know) "My "son, give me thy heart"— implying, that without it all other gifts signify nothing; let me conjure you, therefore, never to say any thing, either in a letter or common conversation, that you do not think; but always let your mind and your words go together, even on the most slight and trivial occasions. Shelter not the least degree of insincerity under the notion of a compliment, which (as far as it deserves to be practised by a man of probity) is only the most civil and obliging way of saying what you really mean; and whoever employs it otherwise throws away truth for good breeding; I need not tell you how little his character gets by such an exchange. I say not this as if I suspected that in any part of your letter you intended only to write what was proper, without any regard to what was true; for I am resolved to believe that you were in good earnest from the beginning to the end of it, as much even as I am when I tell you that I am your loving father.

LETTER IX

Bishop Atterbury to Lord Townsend.

My Lord, The Tower, April 10, 1723.

I AM thankful for the favour of seeing my daughter any way; but was in hopes the restraint of an officer's presence in respect of her might have been judged needless, at a time when her husband is allowed to be as often and as long with me as he pleases without witness, especially since we have been parted now for near eight months *, and must soon, if the Bill takes place †, be parted for ever.

My Lord, I have many things to say to her, in relation to herself, her brother, and my little family affairs, which cannot with ease, to her or me, be said in presence of others; and I dare say your Lordship does not apprehend that the subject of our conversation will be of such a nature as to deserve to be in any degree watched or restrained. She has been the comfort of my life; and I shall leave her with more regret than I leave my preferments (though when I am stripped of them I shall have nothing to support me). Nor is there scarce any loss, besides that of my country, which will touch me so nearly.

Your Lordship, who is known to be a tender father ‡, will feel what I say; and consider how far it is fit to indulge me in so innocent a request. It is a little thing I ask; but nothing is little that can give any relief to a man in my sad circumstances, which deserve your Lordship's compassion, and I hope will obtain it.

I am, with all respect, your Lordship's most humble and most obedient servant.

LETTER X.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mrs. Morice.

Montpelier, Sept. 3, 1729.

My dear Heart,

I HAVE so much to say to you, that I can hardly say any thing to you till I see you. My heart is full; but it is in vain to begin upon paper what I can never end. I have a thousand desires to see you, which are choked by a thousand fears, lest any ill accident should happen to you in the journey. God preserve you in every step of it, and send you safe hither! And I will endeavour, by his blessing and assistance, to send you well back again, and to accompany you in the journey, as far as the law of England

* The Bishop was apprehended Aug. 24, 1722

† It passed the House of Commons on the 9th of April, and received the royal assent May 27.

‡ This Nobleman retired from public business in 1730, and died June 1731.

will suffer me. I stay here only to receive and take care of you (for no other view should have hindered my coming into the north of France this autumn); and I live only to help towards lengthening your life, and rendering it, if I can, more agreeable to you: for I see not of what use I am, or can be, in other respects. I shall be impatient till I hear you are safely landed, and as impatient after that till you are safely arrived in your winter quarters. God, I hope, will favour you with good weather, and all manner of good accidents on the way; and I will take care, my dear love, to make you as easy and happy as I can at the end of your journey.

I have written to Mr Morice about every thing I can think of relating to your accommodation on the road, and shall not therefore repeat any part of it in this letter, which is intended only to acknowledge a mistake under which I find myself. I thought I loved you before as much as I could possibly; but I feel such new degrees of tenderness arising in me upon this terrible long journey, as I was never before acquainted with. God will reward you, I hope, for your piety to me, which had, I doubt not, its share in producing this resolution, and will in rewarding you reward me also, that being the chief thing I have to beg of Him.

Adieu, my dear heart, till I see you! and till then satisfy yourself, that, whatever uneasiness your journey may give you, my expectation of you, and concern for you, will give me more. I am got to another page, and must do violence to myself to stop here — but I will — and abruptly bid you, my dear heart, adieu, till I bid you welcome to Montpelier.

A line, under your own hand, pray, by the post that first sets out after you land at Bourdeaux.

LETTER XI.

Mr. J. [illegible] to his Brother in London.

Dear Brother, Toulouse, Nov. [illegible], 17[illegible].

After a very tedious and fatiguing journey, Mr. Morice and his lady arrived here on Monday morning, the 7th, about seven o'clock, when she [illegible] her father: the only thing, I believe, she had to desire of God in this world. She went to bed, and never slept till she slept her last; and well may it be called so; for never was death received in so composed a manner, as I shall distinctly relate to you from Montpelier. She received the sacrament (upon her earnestly desiring to have it if possible) about an hour and a half before she expired. That remaining time she employed in directing what she would have done in the most material things that relate to family affairs, and that in a very moving manner; and one of the last was to call her husband to her; when she said, "Dear "Mr Morice, take care of the children "— I know you will: remember me to "the Duchess of Buckingham!" —— This fatal stroke, being given on the way to her intended port, must, you will think, put us into uncommon disorder. Mr. Morice goes for England as soon as in a condition to do it. Pray give my family an account of this; and I shall, from Montpelier, do the same at large, as well as to yourself. Adieu! Yours most affectionately.

LETTER XII.

The Bishop of Rochester to Mr. Pope.

I venture to thank you for your kind and friendly letter, because I think myself very sure of a safe conveyance; and I am uneasy till I have told you what impressions it made upon me. I will do it with the same simplicity and truth with which I wrote to you from Montpelier upon a very melancholy occasion; the memory of which would have been in the most touching manner awakened by what you writ, had it been entirely laid asleep, as it never will or can be. Time, and a succession of other objects, added to reason and religion (for even these great principles, that should command our nature, want now and then some assistances from it) may divert the attention of my mind from what it loves too much to think of, though it finds no pleasure in such thoughts: they may deaden the quick sense of grief, and prevent the frequent returns of it; but where it is well fixed, they cannot extinguish it.

LETTER XIII.

*The Bishop of Rochester to * * * *.*

Dear Sir, [Undated.]

Your endeavours that I may forget my misfortune, are truly noble. It would be to deserve them to fly from resolution:

solution. [illegible] not depress me [illegible] and help to bear [illegible] of [illegible] upon my friends. I preserve a mean; which is the excellency, rather, and virtue of all things in the moral species.

Virtue's a mean, and stands in equal ways
Betwixt two vices, this in shade, that blaze.

To grieve for my friend, is no mark of a [illegible] or excessive sorrow; but [illegible] out of a peculiar way of treating things [illegible], not even the subtle traditions of [illegible] you read of, that would magnify nature by depressing the Deity; who, setting forth their necessary agreement, make a necessary strife. With reverence [illegible] I mention these things, and know

Thou the great love of nature fills thy mind,
And universal kindness to thy kind.

I am, while thus juvenile, an advocate for, and not a railer against, extremes. Those symptoms strongly bode a second youth, that vapours with a feeble and defective flame! it is the enervated arm of Priam impotently raised against the thundering rage of youthful Pyrrhus. However, this epistle, my dear friend, shall not become more tawdry by its not being of a piece; for I will conclude with answering your last serious question with another scrap of poetry:

Whate'er the soul of nature has design'd,
And wrought on matter, is th' effect of mind;
The form of substance is the former's art,
Hence beauty and design that strike the heart;
Thence nought in simple matter to delight,
'Tis the fair workmanship that takes the sight.
The beautiful effect of mind alone
Is comely, and in all things comely shown.
Where mind is not, there horror needs must be,
For matter formless is deformity.

LETTER XIV.

Dr. King to Bishop Atterbury.

1699.

GIVE me leave, Sir, to tell you a secret —that I have spent a whole day upon Dr. Bentley's late volume of scandal and criticism*; for every one may not judge it for his credit to be so employed. He thinks meanly, I find, of my reading; as meanly as I think of his sense, his modesty, or his manners; and yet, for all that, I dare say, I have read more than any man in England besides *him* and *me*; for I have read his book all over.

If you have looked into it, Sir, you have found, that a person, under the [illegible] advantages, may take what free [illegible] with the reputation and credit of any gentleman; and that he need not have any regard to another man's character, who has once resolved to expose his own.

It was my misfortune once in my life to be in the same place with Dr. Bentley, and a witness to a great deal of his rude and scurrilous language: which he was so liberal of, as to throw it out at random in a public coffee-house; and I is so silly now as to call it *eavesdropping* in me, because he was so noisy, and I was so near, that I could not help hearing it.

You desired me, at some years distance, to recollect what passed at that meeting; and I obeyed your commands. Shall I reckon it an advantage, that Dr. Bentley, who disputes the other testimonies, falls in entirely with mine? I would, if I were not apprehensive that on that very account it might be one step farther from being credited.

However, such is his spite to me, that he confirms the truth of all I told you. For the only particular I could call to mind he grants, with some slight difference in the expression. And as to the general account I gave of his rudeness and insolence, he denies it indeed, but in so rude and insolent a manner, that there is no occasion for me to justify myself on that head.

I had declared, it seems, that he said, "the MS. of Phalaris would be worth "nothing if it were collated." He sets me right; and avers, the expression was "That, after the various lections were "once taken, and printed, the MS. "would be like a squeezed orange, and "little worth for the future." The similitude of "a squeezed orange," is indeed a considerable circumstance, which I had forgotten; as I doubtless did several others; but, for all that, I remember the general drift and manner of his discourse, as well as if all the particular expressions were present to me. Just as I know his last book to be a disingenuous, vain, confused, unmannerly performance; though, to my happiness, hardly any of his awkward jests or impertinent quotations stick by me.

I had owned it to be my opinion, "that a MS. was worth nothing unless "it were collated." The Doctor cunningly distinguishes upon me; and says, "it is worth nothing indeed to the rest

* The Dissertation on Phalaris, 16, 9.

"of

"of the world; but it is better for the "owner, if a price were to be set upon "it," I beg his pardon for my mistake. I thought we were talking of books in the way of scholars: whereas he answers me like a bookseller, and as if he dealt in MSS. instead of reading them. For my part, I measure the value of these kind of things from the advantage the public may receive from them, and not from the profit they are likely to bring in to a private owner; and therefore I have the same opinion of the Alexandrian MS. * (which, he says, "he keeps "in his lodgings,") now, as I should have had before the Editors of the English Polyglott published the collation of it; though it may not perhaps bear up to the same price in St. Paul's Churchyard, or at an auction; but I hope, if it be safely kept, it need never come to the experiment.

As to the particular reflections he has cast on me, it is no more than I expected. I could neither hope nor wish for better treatment from one that had used you so ill. It is reputable both to men and books to be ill spoken of by him; and a favourable presumption on their side, that there is something in both which may chance to recommend them to the rest of the world. It is in the power of every little creature to throw dirty language: but a man must have some credit himself in the world, before things he says can lessen the reputation of another; and if Dr. Bentley must be thus qualified to mischief me, I am safe from all the harm that his malice can do me. I am, Sir, your most obliged humble servant.

LETTER XV.

Sir Richard Steele to † Mrs. Scurlock.

Madam, Saturday, Aug. 9, 1707.

YOUR wit and beauty are suggestions which may easily lead you into the intention of my writing to you. You may be sure that I cannot be cold to so many good qualities as all that see you must observe in you. You are a woman of a very good understanding, and will not measure my thoughts by any ardour in my expressions, which is the ordinary language on these occasions.

I have reasons for hiding from my nearest relation any purpose I may have resolved upon of waiting on you if you permit it; and I hope you have confidence from mine, as well as your own character, that such a condescension should not be ill used by, Madam, your most obedient servant.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 11, 1707.

I WRIT to you on Saturday by Mrs. Warren; and give you this trouble to urge the same request I made then; which was, that I may be admitted to wait upon you. I should be very far from desiring this, if it were a transgression of the most severe rules to allow it. I know you are very much above the little arts which are frequent in your sex of giving unnecessary torment to their admirers: therefore hope you will do so much justice to the generous passion I have for you, as to let me have an opportunity of acquainting you upon what motives I pretend to your good opinion. I shall not trouble you with my sentiments till I know how they will be received; and as I know no reason why difference of sex should make our language to each other differ from the ordinary rules of right reason, I shall affect plainness and sincerity in my discourse to you, as much as other lovers do perplexity and rapture. Instead of saying "I shall die for you," I profess I should be glad to lead my life with you. You are as beautiful, as witty, as prudent, and as good-humoured, as any woman breathing; but I must confess to you, I regard all these excellencies as you will please to direct them for my happiness or misery. With me, Madam, the only lasting motive to love, is the hope of its becoming mutual. I beg of you to let Mrs. Warren send me word when I may attend you. I promise you I will talk of nothing but indifferent things; though, at the same time, I know not how I shall approach you in the

* Of the Old Testament.

† Mrs. M. Scurlock, afterwards Lady Steele, daughter and sole heiress of Jonathan Scurlock, Esq. of the county of Caermarthen, was at this time a beautiful young lady about the age of 28 or 29. She is styled here, according to the mode of the time when this letter was written, not *Miss*, but *Mistress* Scurlock, though her mother was still living. The appellation of *Miss* was then appropriated to the daughters of gentlemen under the age of ten, or given opprobriously to young gentlewomen reproachable for the giddiness or irregularity of their conduct.

the tender moment of first seeing you after this declaration which has been made by, Madam, your most obedient and most faithful humble servant.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 14, 1707.

I CAME to your house this night to wait on you; but you have commanded me to expect the happiness of seeing you at another time of more leisure. I am now under your own roof while I write; and that imaginary satisfaction of being so near you, though not in your presence, has in it something that touches me with so tender ideas, that it is impossible for me to describe their force. All great passion makes us dumb; and the highest happiness, as well as highest grief, seizes us too violently to be expressed by our words.

You are so good as to let me know I shall have the honour of seeing you when I next come here. I will live upon that expectation, and meditate on your perfections till that happy hour. The vainest woman upon earth never saw in her glass half the attractions which I view in you. Your air, your shape, your every glance, motion, and gesture, have such peculiar graces, that you possess my whole soul, and I know no life but in the hopes of your approbation. I know not what to say, but that I love you with the sincerest passion that ever entered the heart of man. I will make it the business of my life to find out means of convincing you that I prefer you to all that is pleasing upon earth. I am, Madam, your most obedient, most faithful humble servant.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Friday morning, Aug 15, 1707.

HOPING you are in good health, as I am at this present writing, I take the liberty of bidding you good-morrow, and thanking you for yesterday's admission. To know so much pleasure with so much innocence is, methinks, a satisfaction beyond the present condition of human life; but the union of minds in pure affection is renewing the first state of man.

You cannot imagine the gratitude with which I meditate on your obliging behaviour to me, and how much improved in generous sentiments I return from your company: at the same time that you give me a passion for yourself, you inspire me also with a love of virtue.

Mrs. Warren informed me of your intention * on Sunday morning. I forbear indulging myself in a style which my eager wishes prompt me to, out of reverence to that occasion. I am, Madam, your most obliged, most faithful servant.

LETTER XIX.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 16, 1707.

BEFORE the light this morning dawned upon the earth, I awaked, and lay in expectation of its return; not that it could give any new sense of joy to me; but as I hoped it would bless you with its cheerful face, after a quiet which I wished you last night. If my prayers are heard, the day appeared with all the influence of a merciful Creator upon your person and actions. Let others, my lovely charmer, talk of a blind being that disposes their hearts. I contemn their low images of love. I have not a thought which relates to you, that I cannot with confidence beseech the All-seeing Power to bless me in. May he direct you in all your steps, and reward your innocence; your sanctity of manners, your prudent youth, and becoming piety, with the continuance of his grace and protection! This is an unusual language to ladies; but you have a mind elevated above the giddy notions of a sex ensnared by flattery, and misled by a false and short adoration, into a solid and long contempt. Beauty, my fairest creature, palls in the possession; but I love also your mind: your soul is as dear to me as my own; and, if the advantage of a liberal education, some knowledge, and as much contempt of the world, joined with endeavours towards a life of strict virtue and religion, can qualify me to raise new ideas in a breast so well disposed as yours is, our days will pass away with joy; and, instead of introducing melancholy prospects of decay, give us hope of eternal youth in a better life. I have but

* To receive the sacrament.

few minutes from the duty of my employment to write in, and without time to read over what I have writ: therefore beseech you to pardon the first hints of my mind, which I have expressed in so little order. I am, dearest creature, your most obedient, most devoted servant.

LETTER XX.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

Madam, Aug. 17, 1707.

I could not omit writing to you, tho' on Sunday morning, when I know I interrupt your meditation on higher subjects *; there is nothing but Heaven itself which I prefer to your love, which shall be the pursuit of my life; and I hope there will not a day appear to our lives end, wherein there will not appear some instance of an affection, not to be excelled but in the mansions of eternity, to which we may recommend ourselves by our behaviour to each other here. I am, lovely charmer, your obedient . . . .

LETTER XXI.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Lord Sunderland's Office, 1707.

With what language shall I address my lovely Fair, to acquaint her with the sentiments of an heart she delights to torture? I have not a minute's quiet out of your sight; and when I am with you, you use me with so much distance, that I am still in a state of absence, heightened with a view of the charms which I am denied to approach. In a word, you must give me either a fan, a mask, or a glove you have wore, or I cannot live; otherwise you must expect I will kiss your hand, or when I next sit by you, steal your handkerchief. You yourself are too great a bounty to be received at once; therefore I must be prepared by degrees, lest the mighty gift distract me with joy. Dear Mrs. Scurlock, I am tired with calling you by that name; therefore say the day in which you will take that of, Madam, your most obedient, most devoted humble servant.

* The sacrament.

LETTER XXII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Smith-street, Westminster, 1707.

I take up pen and ink to indulge the sensibility of mind I am under, in reflecting upon the agreeable company in which I passed yesterday evening. The day hangs heavily upon me; and the whole business of it is an impertinent guilty dream in comparison of the happiness of a few moments of real life at your house, which go off in privacy and innocence. Were it possible the concern I have for you were mutual, how tedious would be the moments of each other's absence, how fleeting the hours we should be together! How would my mirth be heightened! How my sorrow banished by the appearance of a smile in that countenance where are so charmingly painted complacency, good sense, innocence, honour, and truth! Since this is the figure you bear in my imagination, you cannot blame my desire of having those good qualities my constant companions, and for ever engaged in my interests. My heart overflows with the pleasing prospects which throng into my mind when I think of you. What shall I say. Pr'ythee, Mrs. Scurlock, have pity on, Madam, your most obedient, most faithful servant.

LETTER XXIII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Smith-street, Westminster, 1707.

I lay down last night with your image in my thoughts, and have awakened this morning in the same contemplation. The pleasing transport with which I am delighted, has a sweetness in it, attended with a train of ten thousand soft desires, anxieties, and cares. The day arises on my hopes with new brightness; youth, beauty, and innocence, are the charming objects that steal me from myself, give me joys above the reach of ambition, pride, or glory. Believe me, fair one, to throw myself at your feet is giving myself the highest bliss I know on earth. Oh, hasten ye minutes! bring on the happy morning wherein to be ever her's will make me look down on thrones! Dear Molly, I am passionately, faithfully thine,

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 22, 1707.

If my vigilance, and ten thousand wishes for your welfare and repose, could have any force, you last night slept in security, and had every good angel in your attendance. To have my thoughts ever fixed on you, to live in constant fear of every accident to which human life is liable, and to send up my hourly prayers to avert them from you; I say, Madam, thus to think and thus to suffer, is what I do for her who is in pain at my approach, and calls all my tender sorrow impertinence. You are now before my eyes, my eyes that are ready to flow with tenderness, but cannot give relief to my gushing heart, that dictates what I am now saying, and yearns to tell you all its achings. How art thou, oh my soul, stolen from thyself! how is all my attention broken! My books are blank paper, and my friends intruders. I have no hope of quiet but from your pity: to grant it, would make more for your triumph. To give pain is the tyranny; to make happy, the true empire of beauty. If you would consider aright, you would find an agreeable change in dismissing the attendance of a slave to receive the complaisance of a companion. I bear the former, in hopes of the latter condition. As I live in chains without murmuring at the power which inflicts them, so I could enjoy freedom without forgetting the mercy that gave it. Dear Mrs. Scurlock, the life which you bestow on me shall be no more my own. I am your most devoted, most obedient servant.

LETTER XXV.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 30, 1707.

I beg pardon that my paper is not finer; but I am forced to write from a coffee-house where I am attending about business. There is a dirty crowd of busy faces all around me, talking of money; while all my ambition, all my wealth, is love! Love, which animates my heart, sweetens my humour, enlarges my soul, and affects every action of my life. It is to my lovely charmer I owe, that many noble ideas are continually affixed to my words and actions; it is the natural effect of that generous passion, to create in the admirer some similitude of the object admired. Thus, my dear, am I every day to improve from so sweet a companion. Look up, my fair one, to that Heaven which made thee such, and join with me to implore its influence on our tender innocent hours, and beseech the Author of love to bless the rites he has ordained, and mingle with our happiness a just sense of our transient condition, and a resignation to his will, which only can regulate our minds to a steady endeavour to please him and each other. I am for ever your faithful servant.

LETTER XXVI.

From the same to the same.

Saturday Night, Aug. 30, 1707.

Dear, lovely, Mrs. Scurlock,

I have been in very good company, where your health, under the character of *the woman I love best*, has been often drank; so that I may say I am dead drunk for your sake, which is more than "I die for you."

LETTER XXVII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Sept. 1, 1707.

It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love, and yet attend business. As for me, all who speak to me find me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me.

A gentleman asked me this morning, "What news from Lisbon?" and I answered, "She is exquisitely handsome." Another desired to know "When I had been last at Hampton-court?" I replied, "It will be on Tuesday come se'ennight." Pr'ythee allow me at least to kiss your hand before that day, that my mind may be in some composure. Oh love!

> A thousand torments dwell about thee,
> Yet who would live, to live without thee?

Methinks I could write a volume to you; but all the language on earth would fail in saying how much, and with what disinterested passion, I am ever yours.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

Sept. 2, 1707,
Dear Creature, between one and two.

EVER since seven this morning I have been in company; but have stole a moment, to pour out the fulness of my thoughts, and complain to you of the interruption that impertinent amusement called Business has given me, amidst my contemplation on the best of women, and the most agreeable object that ever charmed the heart of man. I am, dearest, loveliest creature, eternally thine.

LETTER XXIX.

From the same to the same.

Sept. 3, 1707,
Dear Creature, Seven in the Morning.

NEXT to the influence of Heaven, I am to thank you that I see the returning day with pleasure. To pass my evenings in so sweet a conversation, and have the esteem of a woman of your merit, has in it a particularity of happiness no more to be expressed than returned; but I am, my lovely creature, contented to be on the obliged side, and to employ all my days in new endeavours to convince you, and all the world, of the sense I have of your condescension in chusing, Madam, your most faithful, most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XXX.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock, sen.

Lord Sunderland's Office,
Madam, Whitehall, Sep. 3, 1707.

THE young lady, your daughter, told me she had a letter from you of 22d instant, wherein you gave her the highest marks of your affection and anxiety for her welfare, in relation to me. The main prospect on these occasions is that of fortune; therefore I shall very candidly give you an account of myself as to that particular. My late wife had so extreme a value for me, that she, by fine, conveyed to me her whole estate, situate in Barbadoes, which, with the stock and slaves, proper securities being given for the payment of the rent, is let for eight hundred-and-fifty pounds *per annum*, at half-yearly payments; that is to say, 425 l. each first of May, and 425 l. each first of December. This estate came to her incumbered with a debt of 3000 l. by legacies and debts of her brother, whose executrix she was, as well as heiress. I must confess it has not been in my power to lessen the incumbrance, by reason of chargeable sicknesses, and not having at that time any employment of profit; but at present, and ever since May last, I have been appointed by the Secretaries of State to write the Gazette, with a salary of 300 l. a year, paying a tax of 45 l. I am also gentleman-waiter to his Royal Highness the Prince, with a salary of 100 l. a year, not subject to taxes.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Thus my whole income is at present, *per annum* -	1250	0	0
Deduct the interest of 3000 l.	180	0	0
Taxes for my employment	45	0	0
	225	0	0
Remains after these deductions - -	1025	0	0

This is, Madam, the present state of my affairs; and, though this income is so large, I have not taken any regard to lay up any thing further than just what pays the interest above mentioned. If I may be so happy to obtain your favour, so as we may live together with singleness of mind, I shall readily go into such measures as shall be thought most advisable for our mutual interest; and, if it is thought fit, will sell what I have in the Plantations. Your daughter acquaints me, there is a demand of 1400 l. upon your estate, the annual income of which is better than 400 l. *per annum*. You have now the whole view of both our circumstances before you; and you see there is foundation for our living in an handsome manner, provided we can be of one mind; without which I could not propose to myself any happiness or blessing, were my circumstances ever so plentiful. I am at a present juncture in my affairs, and my friends are in great power, so that it would be highly necessary for us to be in the figure of life which we shall think convenient to appear in, as soon as may be, that I may prosecute my expectations in a busy way while the wind is for me; with just consideration that about a court it will not always blow one

one way. Your coming to town is mightily to be wished. I promise myself the pleasures of an industrious and virtuous life, in studying to do things agreeable to you; but I will not enlarge into professions. I assure you, I shall always contend with you who shall lay the greater obligations on the other; and I can form to myself no greater satisfaction than having one day your permission to subscribe myself, Madam, your most obedient son and most humble servant.

Writing is painful to me. If you inclose your letters to your daughter, they will come free, "To Richard Steele, Esq. "at the Secretary's Office, Whitehall."

LETTER XXXI.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

Dear Madam, Sept. 5, 1707.

THE pleasing hope with which my mind is possessed, is too delicate a touch of the soul to be explained; but it is founded on so solid and lasting motives, that I am sure it will actuate the behaviour of my whole life: for I do not entertain my imagination with those transports only which are raised by beauty, but fix it also on the satisfactions which flow from the reverence due to virtue. Thus I am not only allured by your person, but convinced by your life, that you are the most amiable of women. Let us go on, my lovely creature, to make our regards to each other mutual and unchangeable, that, while the world around us is enchanted with the false satisfactions of vagrant desires, our persons may be shrines to each other, and sacred to conjugal faith, unreserved confidence, and heavenly society. While we live after this manner, angels will be so far from being our superiors, that they will be our attendants. Every good being guard my fairest, and conduct her to that bosom that pants to receive her, and protect her from all the cares and vicissitudes of life with an eternal tenderness! I am ever most obligingly yours.

LETTER XXXII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Sept. 10, 1707.

BEING very uneasy when absent from you, I desire you would give me leave to take coach and come to your house: in order to which, pray let Warren be in the way to admit your most obliged humble servant.

LETTER XXXIII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock, sen.

Lord Sunderland's Office,
Madam, Whitehall, Sep. 20, 1707.

BY Tuesday's post I took the liberty to write to you on the most important occasion, and have been in ten thousand anxieties ever since that time, for the reception which that letter is to find. The circumstance is so tender, and my happiness hangs so much upon it, that I could not forbear seconding my first address to you with a second, though I protest to you, I set pen to paper with as much diffidence as if I had the same passion for yourself as for your daughter. I do not entertain you with an account of my fortune, and those particulars which will naturally be enquired into by a parent; because I doubt not but you have so good an opinion of Mrs. Scurlock's prudence, that you do not believe she would throw herself away. As to your favour to my pretensions, I hope it upon no other foundation than making it appear to you, that as to your own part in the affair, there is no man breathing that could come into your alliance, who should, in all the offices of life, and peculiar esteem for yourself, exceed the gratitude of, Madam, your most obedient, most humble servant.

LETTER XXXIV.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

My Dear Wife, Oct. 8, 1707.

YOU were not, I am sure, awake so soon as I was for you, and desired the blessing of God upon you. After that first duty, my next is to let you know I am in health this morning; which I know you are solicitous for. I believe, it would not be amiss if, some time this afternoon, you took a coach or chair, and went to see an house next door to Lady Bulkley's, towards St. James's-street, which is to be let. I have a solid reason for quickening my diligence in all affairs

affairs of the world, which is, that you are my partaker in them, and will make me labour more than any incitation of ambition or wealth could do. After I have implored the help of Providence, I will have no motive to my actions but the love of the best creature living, to whom I am an obedient husband.

LETTER XXXV.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

Dear Madam, Oct. 8, 1707.

I could not forbear letting you know that I have received letters this moment from Barbadoes, which will facilitate my business; so natural is it that all things must grow better by your condescending to be partner to your most obliged husband and most humble servant.

LETTER XXXVI.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock, sen.

Honoured Mother, Oct. 14, 1707.

I am very sorry to find, by Mrs. Scurlock's letter, that you keep your bed; which makes me almost in despair of seeing you so soon as I promised myself.

I have taken an house in Berry-street, St. James's, and beg your leave to remove your goods thither; where I hope we shall live all together in the strictest love and friendship. Whatever better prospects your daughter might well have given herself, from her great merit and good qualities, I shall take care to have it said, that she could not have married more advantageously with regard to her mother, who shall always find me her most obedient son and most humble servant.

Your daughter gives her duty to you.

LETTER XXXVII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock.

Oct. 16, 1707.

Dearest Being on Earth,

Pardon me if you do not see me till eleven o'clock, having met a schoolfellow from India, by whom I am to be informed in things this night which extremely concern your obedient husband.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Scurlock, sen.

Lord Sunderland's Office,
Honoured Madam, Oct. 28, 1707.

I was very glad to find last post that my wife had a letter, which informed her of the amendment of your health. She tells me there is, at the same time, a message sent her that my hand is required for the payment of some money in the country. I accordingly inclose such a direction, and in any thing that it may be necessary to have my concurrence, you have it without reserve; for I sincerely rely on your prudence and goodness, both in acting for me and in favour to me. If you think it convenient that I do this in a more formal way, be pleased to command, Madam, your most obedient son, and most humble servant.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Honoured Madam, Nov. 4, 1707.

I am sorry your indisposition continues, and keeps you in the country; I have myself been under a very severe illness for some days, but am now almost recovered. This is my wife's birth-day, and I am come down stairs to celebrate it with as much good humour as my present health will permit. Your health is not omitted in our cheerful moments, and your company will extremely improve them. I am, Madam, your most obedient son and most humble servant.

Your daughter has been very ill till this day. She gives her duty.

LETTER XL.

From the same to the same.

Honoured Madam, Nov. 13, 1707.

I am very glad to hear by uncle Scurlock's last letters, that you have taken in your horses in order to your journey. Since my last to you, I have had an affliction which was perfectly new to me; a fit of the gout. I am a little awkward at my crutches, and have not been so patient as longer experience of this sort of evil usually makes us. Our new house will be ready for our goods next week; and, as soon as it is so, we will remove

remove to it. I am out of pain, though I cannot stir; in the mean while your daughter is dancing at the other end of the room. She gives her duty to you. I am extremely obliged to my uncle Scurlock for his kind present, which will be in town to-morrow night. I am, Madam, your most obedient son, and humble servant.

LETTER XLI.

From the same to the same.

Lord Sunderland's Office,
Honoured Madam, Nov. 20, 1707.

My wife shewed me a letter of the 15th from Mrs. Pugh, wherein there are the general complaints under which every body at present is sighing, whose concerns are wholly in land. Chearful and ingenuous tempers may agree so well, and concert their affairs in such a manner, as to make all things easy. I extremely long to see you; and hope to be on my legs to receive you, when I first do myself the honour of kneeling to you, and telling how much I am, Madam, your most obedient son, and most humble servant.

My absolute governess gives her duty to you.

LETTER XLII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Steele.

Dear Ruler, Dec. 8, 1707.

I CANNOT wait upon you to-day to Hampton-Court. I have the West-Indian business on my hand,* and find very much to be done before Thursday's post. I shall dine at our table at court, where the bearer knows how to come to me with any orders for your obedient husband, and most humble servant.

My duty to my mother.

LETTER XLIII.

From the same to the same.

My dear, dear Wife, Dec. 22, 1707.

I WRITE to let you know I do not come home to dinner, being obliged to attend some business abroad, of which I shall give you an account (when I see you in the evening) as becomes your dutiful and obedient husband.

* The plantation in Barbadoes, left to Steele by his first wife.

LETTER XLIV.

From the same to the same.

Devil Tavern, Temple-Bar,
Dear Prue, Jan. 3, 1708.

I HAVE partly succeeded in my business to-day, and inclose two guineas as earnest of more. Dear Prue, I cannot come home to dinner. I languish for your welfare, and will never be a moment careless more. Your faithful husband.

Send me word you have received this.

LETTER XLV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Eleven at Night, Jan. 5, 1708.

I was going home two hours ago, but was met by Mr. Griffith, who has kept me ever since meeting me as he came from Mr. Lambert's. I will come within a pint of wine.

We drink your health, and Mr. Griffith is your servant.

LETTER XLVI.

From the same to the same.

May 19, 1708.
Lord Sunderland's Office, eleven o'clock.

Dear Prue,

I DESIRE of you to get the coach and yourself ready as soon as you can conveniently, and call for me here, from whence we will go and spend some time together in the fresh air, in free conference. Let my best periwig be put in the coach-box, and my new shoes, for it is a comfort to be well-dressed in agreeable company. You are vital life to your obliged, affectionate husband, and humble servant.

LETTER XLVII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Wife, Aug. 11, 1708.

I HAVE ordered Richard to take your directions, whether you will have the chariot with two or four horses to set you

and your friend down at your house at Hampton-Court. Watts is gone over the water, and says she has your commands to follow in the stage-coach. I shall make it the business of my life to make you easy and happy. Consult your cool thoughts, and you will know that it is the glory of a woman to be her husband's friend and companion, and not his sovereign director. I am, with truth, sincerity, and tenderness, ever your faithful husband.

Pray let the gardener put the place in order.

LETTER XLVIII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Steele.

Madam, Aug. 12, 1708.

I HAVE your letter, wherein you let me know, that the little dispute we have had is far from being a trouble to you; nevertheless, I assure you, any disturbance between us is the greatest affliction to me imaginable. You talk of the judgment of the world; I shall never govern my actions by it, but by the rules of morality and right reason. I love you better than the light of my eyes, or the life-blood in my heart; but, when I have let you know that, you are also to understand, that neither my sight shall be so far inchanted, or my affection so much master of me, as to make me forget our common interest. To attend my business as I ought, and improve my fortune, it is necessary that my time and my will should be under no direction but my own. Pray give my most humble service to Mrs. Binns. I write all this rather to explain my own thoughts to you than answer your letter distinctly. I inclose it to you, that, upon second thoughts, you may see the disrespectful manner in which you treat your affectionate, faithful husband.

LETTER XLIX.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 13, 1708.

I HOPE this will find you in good health, as I am at this present writing, thanks be to God for it.

I have not only rebelled against you, but all the rest of my governors, from yourself, whom I acknowledge to have the right of partnership, to the lowest person who had to do with me. I have a very just sense of your merit, and think, when I have put you into the proper methods which you ought to follow, I shall be the happiest man living in being your most affectionate husband, and humble servant.

LETTER L.

From the same to the same.

Monday morning,

Dear Prue, Aug. 16, 1708.

I HOPE you have composed your mind, and are convinced that the methods I have taken were absolutely necessary for our mutual good. I do assure you, there is not that thing on earth, except my honour and that dignity which every man who lives in the world must preserve to himself, which I am not ready to sacrifice to your will and inclination.

I dined yesterday with my Lord Halifax, where the beauties in the garden were drunk too. I have settled a great deal of business within these few days, of all which I will give you an account when we meet. I am, with the most sincere affection, your obliged husband.

I sent you some tea on Friday last. My most humble service to Mrs. Binns.

LETTER LI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Sept. 13, 1708.

I WRITE to you in obedience to what you ordered me; but there are not words to express the tenderness I have for you. Love is too harsh a word for it: but if you knew how my heart aches when you speak an unkind word to me, and springs with joy when you smile upon me, I am sure you would place your glory rather in preserving my happiness like a good wife, than tormenting me like a peevish beauty. Good Prue, write me word you shall be overjoyed at my return to you, and pity the awkward figure I make when I pretend to resist you, by complying always with the reasonable demands of your enamoured husband.

P. S. I am Mrs. Binns's servant.

LETTER LII.

From the same to the same.

Five in the evening,
Dear Prue, Sept. 19, 1708.

I SEND you seven pennyworth of walnuts at five a penny, which is the greatest proof I can give you at present of my being, with my whole heart, yours.

The little horse comes back with the boy, who returns with him for me on Wednesday evening; in the mean time, I believe, it will be well that he runs in the park.

I am Mrs. Binns's servant.

Since I writ this, I came to the place where the boy was ordered with the horses; and, not finding him, sent this bearer, lest you should be in fears, the boy not returning.

P. S. There are but 29 walnuts.

LETTER LIII.

From the same to the same.

Almost nine at night,
Dear Prue, Oct. 29, 1708.

I BEG the favour of you to take care to wrap yourself up very warm for your journey to-morrow. The coachman has his orders; and I have agreed with him to bring you to Kensington-square, and carry Mrs. Binns's home, in hopes she will dispense with your waiting upon her, and returning afterwards to your lodgings.

I shall take care to have your lodgings fit for your reception, and will never omit any thing in my power to make your hours agreeable. Your affectionate husband.

LETTER LIV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Nov. 13, 1708.

I SEND you all the money I have, which I hope will bring you to town. Since you have an inclination to see the funeral, I have spoken for a place at the housekeeper's of the House of Lords to place you in, till I can get you a more convenient one for seeing the procession; and I take it that it will be best to be in the Abbey itself, for which end you must come soon. I am ordered to stay here, or should come for you. Yours, with all my soul.

The fleet is come in.

LETTER LV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Wife, Nov. 17, 1708.

HOW can you add to my cares, by making so unjust complaints against me as in yours of last night? I take all the pains imaginable to bring you home to ease and satisfaction, and made a great step in it yesternight, which I could not had I spent my time elsewhere than where I did. My dear, be chearful, and expect a good account of things this evening, from dear wife, your most affectionate and most obliged husband.

LETTER LVI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Wife, May 5, 1709.

I CANNOT express to you the real sorrow the inequality of my behaviour gives me, when I reflect that I am in passion before the best of women. Dear Prue, forgive me: I will neglect nothing which may contribute to our ease together; and you shall always find me your affectionate, faithful, and tender husband.

LETTER LVII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, April 7, 1710.

I INCLOSE to you a receipt for the saucepan and spoon, and a note of 23l. of Lewis's, which will make up the 50l. I promised for your ensuing occasion.*

I know no happiness in this life in any degree comparable to the pleasure I have in your person and society: I only beg of you to add to your other charms, a fearfulness to see a man that loves you in pain and uneasiness, to make me as happy as it is possible to be in this life. Rising a little in a morning, and being

* Mrs. Steele was then pregnant with her first child.

disposed to a chearfulness,* . . . . . would not be amiss. I am your most affectionate husband, and obedient servant.

There are papers in the parlour window, dated from Hamburgh and other places, which I want.

LETTER LVIII.

Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Steele, at Mrs. Bradshaw's House at Sandy-end, over against the Bull Alehouse in Fulham-road.

Wednesday, Aug. 9, 1710.
Berry-street, half-hour after six.

Dear Prue,

THOU art such a foolish tender thing, that there is no living with thee.

I have broke my rest last night, because I knew you would be such a fool as not to sleep. Pray come home by this morning's coach, if you are impatient; but if you are not here before noon, I will come down to you in the evening: but I must make visits this morning, to hear what is doing. Yours ever.

LETTER LIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Creature, July, 24, 1712.

ALL you desire shall be done. I beg of you to compose yourself: for nothing else can [make] happy one that doats on you so much that he cannot hide it, though he heartily wishes he could. Yours unchangeably.

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same, at Carmarthen, South Wales.

Dear Prue, Saturday, Nov. 17, 1716.

MOLLY's distemper proves the small-pox, which she has very favourably, and a good kind. Mrs. Evans is very good; and Nurse Jervase very diligent; Sarah has every good quality, and the whole family are in health beside the dear infant. I am very close at my papers, not having been two hours out of the house since I parted with you. Pray take care of yourself. I love you to distraction; for I cannot be angry at any thing you do. let it be ever so odd and unexpected, to the tenderest of husbands.

We had not, when you left us, an inch of candle, a pound of coal, or a bit of meat, in the house; but we do not want now.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Nov. 20, 1716.

I AM here under the double severity of your absence and Molly's sickness; but I hope you are well, as the child is, in her condition. She has the small-pox with very favourable symptoms, and is very well attended by Evans and her husband, Sarah, and Nurse Jervase. I am, with the utmost affection, your obedient husband, and most humble servant.

I hope to begin my journey† the day after Willmot's return.

I opened this after sealed, to let you know Willmot is come.

LETTER LXII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Nov. 26, 1716.

I HOPE this will find you safe at Carmarthen, and that you find all things easy there. There is nothing extraordinary has occurred here. Your daughter Betty was very well yesterday: I made her be brought out as I rode by.

I have been much on horseback to prepare for my journey, for which I expect orders on Monday next out of Scotland. This is the ninth day with my dear Molly in the small-pox; she has many in the body, few in the face: they are, they say, very kindly. Nurse Jervase, with her duty, recommends herself to you for her extraordinary care and diligence about your child. Mrs. Evans and her husband deserve very well of us. I am with the tenderest love, your most obedient husband, and most humble servant.

My most humble service to the widow, and all the family.

* A few words are here cut out.

† To Scotland whither he was going as a Commissioner of the forfeited estates.

LETTER LXIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Dec. 18, 1716.

WHETHER I love you because you are the mother of the children, or them because you are their mother, I know not; but I am sure I am growing a very covetous creature for the sake of both of you. I am making haste to Scotland: have only a small affair, which I will acquaint you with in my next, and am entirely yours.

LETTER LXIV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, Christmas-day.

I WENT the other day to see Betty at Chelsea, who represented to me, in her pretty language, "that she seemed "helpless and friendless, without any "body's taking notice of her at Christ-"mas, when all the children but she and "two more were with their relations." I have invited her to dinner to-day, with one of the teachers, and they are here now in the room; Betty and Moll very noisy and pleased together. Bess goes back again, as soon as she has dined, to Chelsea. I have stayed in, to get a very advantageous affair dispatched; for, I assure you, I love money at present as well as your ladyship, and am entirely yours.

I told Betty I had writ to you; and she made me open the letter again; and give her humble duty to her mother, and desire to know when she shall have the honour to see her in town. She gives her love to Mrs. Bevans and all her cousins.

LETTER LXV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, [Undated.]

I HAVE yours, and, if I have ever offended you, am heartily sorry for it, and beg your pardon. As to the next circumstance, the world is all alike every where; and I know no occasion for expecting great friendship, and disinterested conduct; but maintain a discreet and distant correspondence, at the same time always ready to do what good one can to relations, without thinking of what return they will make. I do, as you advise, court and converse with men able and willing to serve me. But after this, you grow very pleasant, and talk of 800l. Please to shew me in your next how you make out such a demand upon me, and you shall have my serious answer to it. Your words are, "the full "800l. you owe me." You advise me to take care of my soul: I do not know what you can think of yours, when you have and do with-hold from me your body. I observe what you say of cousin Alexander, and shall be glad of his correspondence. I have not yet had any money as a commissioner; but shall next week, and then will pay Betty's schooling, &c. Your most obedient, humble husband and servant.

I inclose to you a letter from Morgan Davies, with my answer on the back. I believe you had better conceal that. I send you his letter; you may be sure he shall have no consent of mine separate from yours, for you rule me entirely.

LETTER LXVI.

From the same to the same.

[Undated.]

My dearest Prue, and beloved Wife, &c.

I HAVE yours of the 7th instant, which turns wholly upon my taking care of my health, and advice to forbear embarking too deeply in public matters, which you enforce by reminding me of the ingratitude I have met with. I have as quick sense of the ill-treatment I have received as is consistent with keeping up my own spirit and good-humour. Whenever I am a malcontent, I will take care not to be a gloomy one, but hope to keep some stings of wit and humour in my own defence. I am talking to my wife, and therefore may speak my heart and the vanity of it. I know, and you are witness, that I have served the Royal Family with an unreservedness due only to Heaven, and I am now (I thank my brother Whigs) not possessed of twenty shillings from the favour of the court. The Playhouse it had been barbarity to deny at the player's request, and therefore I do not allow it a favour. But I banish the very memory of these things, nor will I expect any thing but what I must

strike

strike out of myself. By Tuesday's post I think I shall be able to guess when I shall leave the town, and turn all my thoughts to finish my comedy.* You will find I have got so much constancy and fortitude as to live my own way (within the rules of good-breeding and decency) where-ever I am; for I will not sacrifice your husband, and the father of the poor babes, to any one's humour in the world. But to provide for, and do you good, is all my ambition.

I have a list of 21 leases for the setting out 1991. 8s. *per annum*. I have not yet heard of Mr. Philips. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

LETTER LXVII.

Sir Richard Steele to Lady Steele.

Hampton-Court.

Dear Prue, March 16, 1716-17.

If you have written any thing to me which I should have received last night, I beg your pardon that I cannot answer it till the next post. The House of Commons will be very busy the next week; and I had many things, public and private, for which I wanted four-and-twenty hours retirement, and therefore came to visit your son. I came out of town yesterday, being Friday, and shall return to-morrow. Your son, at the present writing, is mighty well employed, in tumbling on the floor of the room, and sweeping the sand with a feather. He grows a most delightful child, and very full of play and spirit. He is also a very great scholar: he can read his Primer; and I have brought down my Virgil. He makes most shrewd remarks upon the pictures. We are very intimate friends and playfellows. He begins to be very ragged; and I hope I shall be pardoned if I equip him with new cloaths and frocks, or what Mrs. Evans and I shall think for his service. I am, dear Prue, ever yours.

LETTER LXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Prue, [Undated.]

I have yours, wherein you mention Fuller, and the account you have that he shewed an insolent joy at his wife's death. I do not set up to excuse his conduct towards his wife, but shall take care of mine towards my own.

You tell me you want a little flattery from me. I assure you I know no one who deserves so much commendation as yourself, and to whom saying the best things would be so little like flattery. The thing speaks itself, considering you as a very handsome woman that loves retirement, one who does not want wit, and yet is extremely sincere; and so I could go through all the vices which attend the good qualities of other people, of which you are exempt. But, indeed, though you have every perfection, you have one extravagant fault, which almost frustrates the good in you to me, and that is, that you do not love to dress, to appear, to shine out, even at my request, and to make me proud of you, or rather to indulge the pride I have that you are mine. This is all I wish changed in you, which I hope you will bring about, and condescend to be, what nature made you, the most beauteous and most agreeable of your sex, at the instance of, dear Prue, your most affectionate, obsequious husband.

A quarter of Molly's schooling is paid. The children are perfectly well.

LETTER LXIX.

From the same to the same.

My dearest Prue, March 26, 1717.

I have received yours, wherein you give me the sensible affliction of letting me know of the continual pain in your head. I could not meet with necessary advice; but, according to the description you give me, I am confident washing your head in cold water will cure you; I mean, having water poured on your head, and rubbed with an hand, from the crown of your head to the nape of your neck. When I lay in your place, and on your pillow, I assure you, I fell into tears last night, to think that my charming little insolent might be then awake and in pain, and took it to be a sin to go to sleep.

For this tender passion towards you, I must be contented that your Prueship will condescend to call yourself my well-wisher. I am going abroad, and write before I go out, lest accidents should happen

* If this was his "Conscious Lovers," it remained unfinished till 1721.

pen to prevent my writing at all. If I can meet with further advice for you, I will send it in a letter to Alexander. I am, dear Prue, ever thine.

LETTER LXX.

From the same to the same, at Carmarthen, South Wales.

Dear Prue, [Undated.]

I AM, as you observe, still in town, and have your rallying letter. The claims of the fair sex are, you say, unaccountable. It is well for you they are; for, I assure you, I think you both the fairest and the best of women.

I have been much at home and alone since we parted. I am come to a resolution of making my three children my partners, and will constantly lay up something out of all receipts of money for each of them, in a box bearing the name of the little one to whom it belongs. Betty grows tall, and has the best air I ever saw in any creature of her age. I am going to dine with the Speaker. Things at court seem to be in a very uncertain way. I am, dear Prue, eternally yours.

LETTER LXXI.

From the same to the same.

My Dear Prue, Sept. 20, 1717.

I HAVE yours of the 16th, and am heartily troubled that we share in a new calamity, to wit, having the same distemper.* Pray take care of yourself, and you will find that we shall be in great plenty before another year turns round. My dear wife, preserve yourself for him that sincerely loves you, and to be an example to your little ones of religion and virtue. If it pleases God to bless us together with life and health, we will live a life of piety and chearful virtue. Your daughter Bess gives her duty to you, and says she will be your comfort, but she is very sorry you are afflicted with the gout. The brats, my girls, stand on each side the table: and Molly says, that what I am writing now is about her new coat. Bess is with me till she has new cloaths. Miss Moll has taken upon her to hold the sand-box, and is so impertinent in her office, that I cannot write more. But you are to take this letter as from your three best friends,

Bess, Moll, and their Father.

Eugene was very well this morning. Moll bids me let you know that she fell down just now, and did not hurt herself. Betty and Moll gave their service to Sam and Myrtle.

* The gout.

LETTER LXXII.

Mr. Meyricke to Miss Steele.

Madam, Pembrokeshire.

I HAVE lately heard a very excellent character of the honesty of John Trelogan; and as I know how to esteem every recommendation of yours, I therefore employ him in a case of the highest importance to myself, the carriage of a hundred weight of love, right good as any in England, at your service. Do not let your generous temper be in pain to make any return; I must ask none. Allow me leave to send you all I have, for I am abundantly supplied, and think it no trouble; for, believe me, it is no trouble at all, Cousin. In mighty pain surely, I have convinced you, Madam, how conformable I can be to your command, since I have left your presence, where my only quiet and repose dwell. It is true, I might find more safety, but I buy it at a most extravagant purchase. You will, perhaps, draw a charge of a very ready shew of disobedience even in my declaration of it, because you have commanded me not to love: but, not to love, is not to live; and not to love you, would be death in the worst form it can appear in. Do not, my fair unbeliever, urge my crime in this, since I would die to be obedient to you in any thing; for it is the just resolve and constitution of my mind. If my passion can be recommended by its purity, by its religious and heavenly fondness, it has that, and yet much more, to say for itself, if you would hear it. When you meet with any body that can love you better, that will more readily subject his little life and fortune to your pleasure and inclination, I must then only learn to be content from your happiness, and I must for ever own myself in the most religious rights, and greatest tenderness of my soul, dear Mrs. Steele, your most passionately fond admirer, and ever-more devoted.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Meyricke to Miss Steele.

Prush, Thursday, Jan. 6, 1730.

Madam,

COULD I apprehend any danger when I conform to your commands, I might have been extremely sensible of it last Monday night, when I met about a thousand coal-pits, with open mouths ready to devour me, just covered over with snow, and, under that disguise of their complexion, might have ensnared a man much more in his senses than myself. In all these threatening dangers, my charming Stella diverted my thoughts; and every the greatest fright and fear was removed from before my eyes by the pleasing idea I had of that lovely creature. Thus, Madam, am I thankful for the noble inspiration you give my soul of courage and constancy, which will enable me to brave the fury of every storm I can possibly meet with in life. It may, indeed, be very inconsistent with a modern fine gentleman, or a lover, before his mistress, to offer any thanksgiving to the Divine Providence for his protection; but sure it cannot offend the good, the pious Miss Steele. No; it is to that infinite, all-wise Being, who trieth the very heart, that I pray to shew me mercy; to Him let me be instant in prayer, who sees all things intuitively: and may his influence direct and govern you when it is possible for your own human prudence to fail you! I am, my lovely creature, every way engaged to you; and surely it concerns you not a little, in the excellency of your mind as a good Christian, to support me a little better under my present inquietude, and great suspense of happiness. Oh! would you take but one view of my soul, and see the rejoicings it has at the pleasure you could give it! Do, my charmer, lay one obligation upon me, which every part of my life would be industriously employed to return. I wish you would see with what a disinterested passion I am yours. But why should I be thus importunate to a generous mind, which has the gift of charity? I pray the Almighty to govern and direct you in the right use of it; and believe me, dear Miss Steele, to be for ever yours.

If you cannot send me something to live upon here, I must see Carmarthen soon; shall I?

LETTER LXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Madam, [Undated.]

IT seems it is in love, as it is in the worship of the Gods: we are still to supplicate, still to pray, though the Deity we adore gives us no positive assurance of mercy, by a gracious appearance or promise to us. We are bid, indeed, in one case, to "hear Moses and the pro-"phets;" but such are my unhappy circumstances, that I have no certain known rules to go by; however, I shall keep close to the letter of the law, and "love "without ceasing." Under this uncertain state and perplexity I may, with more justice than the child-bed lady, ask, "What have I done, ye Gods, to de-"serve thus?" Be still, O my soul! and please thyself with those imaginations, that thy great distractions will, some time or other, have a happy end. The Spectator has observed, that "to be ena-"moured with a lady of sense and vir-"tue, is an improvement of the under-"standing and morals." I own I have an exceeding good opinion of my governess; only I think her discipline a little too rigid and severe, at present, for my tender nature; but I hope there will be nothing wanting in her indulgent care, as I am sure there shall not in my honest endeavours * . . . . . .

. . . . . .

I wish you would suffer it to be argued by myself or counsel. I will make my regard known for your person by every thing that can be done. I esteem you too precious to be bought or sold, or I would offer all I have with a frank and honest heart, which you shall be acquainted with as soon as you please. My rivals may probably be better able to purchase the pleasant fields of Llanguner, which have so many beauties and delights, that I would wish you, as a friend, never to part with them: but I fain would be the purchaser of your person, and I freely bid my life and fortune, which I shall never have occasion to murmur or repine at, till you declare them below your notice. Teach me, oh! instruct me, dear Miss Steele, how to value both, and let me live in love and truth eternally yours.

Your horse has promised me the honour of a visit to-morrow.

* Here a few words are purposely cut out.

LETTER LXXV.

From the same to the same, at Mr. Scurlock's.

Prush, Sunday morn,
Madam, Eight o'Clock.

ACCORDING to the best calculation I can make, it is now a hundred and sixteen hours, thirteen minutes, and three seconds, &c. since I left Carmarthen: a very tedious and melancholy time, under which I have been chiefly supported by the parson of the parish, who is indeed a good sensible brown man, only a little unhappy in his too great relish for the very thirsty weed of tobacco, and the liquid manufacture of our country, ale. The near approach of the very solemn season just at hand, led us into conversation suitable to the occasion; and in the progress of our discourse, he so well insinuated himself into a familiarity with me, that he gained the inmost recesses of my soul, where he found such gloomy sorrow and sadness as drew his compassion, and, I hope, may in time deserve yours, or I must have recourse to him, or some more able and discreet minister, for ghostly counsel, &c. The poor man, in the honesty of his heart, for the good of religion, and to the best of his capacity, directed the most religious use of my affections, and urged very strong and sacred reasons against "setting my heart "too much upon the things of this "world." But such is the depravity of nature, dear Doctor, I cannot help it. Heaven forgive me, if it can be my offence to love Miss Steele too much, and punish me for that crime towards any other lady! Being at present in a good disposition of mind to prepare myself for the next world, I intend by the assistance of God, this day to answer the most positive command of heaven; and I am persuaded, in the purity of my conscience, that I can give no offence in this very solemn assurance under my hand, that I love you above the world, abstracted from any views of fortune, but merely on account of your agreeable person, pretty sense, most excellent temper, and very sweet endowments of good-nature in its primitive sense. But if your resolutions are unalterable, your inclinations different from any thing in me, and you can neither be thus charitable or generous as to reward so well-grounded a passion, I can then greatly lament my endless misfortune, and resolve never more to give trouble, or offence, where I love so well. But, if you are not very determined to the contrary, I will cheerfully serve, in great constancy, your own time, though naturally as impatient a lover as you have met with. Do not absolutely despise the honesty and simplicity of this heart: if you resolve against it, urge its crime in loving too much, and declare your dislike of too fond a husband. You may most certainly oblige me so far, as to make me conform to every thing you please; for I know not how it happens, but so it is, I had much rather be your slave, than claim a superiority over any lady I ever saw. Your generous temper may, perhaps, despise so servile a declaration; but think it is to you only I can so far resign myself. Perhaps you may like better to be treated with the power and authority of a very husband. Indeed you may trust yourself with any person, for you have such winning engagements as can sooth and soften the most contradictory temper; therefore you need not wish a greater variety of choice: lose as little time as possible, for your joys will be confirmed at a time when other people are to be wished into them by their friends. You have admirers enough, Madam, to pay you compliments; but if truths, as divine and sacred as any I have found in good books, which I have been conversant with these three days, can recommend what I say, you are beyond expression dear to me; and every thing you do, and say, gives me admiration and pleasure, but when you speak my death. I have been so very happy as to be supported by the most engaging friendship that I have yet met with in life, without which I had sunk in very bitter anguish of thought long before this day. May you be blessed with all that Heaven can send you: and believe me to be, from my inmost soul, dear Miss Steele, yours, as much as possible man can be.

My nerves, Madam, are exceeding good, for my shaking hand is only a natural consequence of my aching heart at this juncture.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. Harcourt to Miss Steele, in Carmarthen, South Wales.

"OUT of sight out of mind," is a proverb which, on many occasions, might be founded in truth. Miss Steele perhaps, at present may best known wherein it has been verified. Give me leave to assure you, it is not so with me in respect to one who is the very grace and ornament of her sex.

Permit me, Madam, to send you this now only as the tribute of my wishes, where my poor services in times past were, or would be now, less regarded. However, had you thought me worthy of that heart, which you keep reserved for some other, haply you would have found me not the least faithful, nor the least sensible of the obligation. But beauty, goodness, and good sense, such as you are the happy mistress of, will always claim the best wishes and goodwill of the most uncivilised and barbarous. But since praise from some, even to the most praise-worthy, will be found unacceptable; myself too conscious of the application, I shall decline the unwelcome task.

It would be too romantic to tell you into what an abyss of melancholy . . . . . fell into on parting from you (heavens forbid the omen!) I hope no presage of any ill accident. Why could not I, the most faithful, though meanest, of your servants, be permitted to see you to your journey's end? I could have returned with pleasure had I but seen you safe! but you thought otherwise, and it becomes me to be silent.

. . . . . .

I hope her late indisposition has left her; if not, I hope no time will be lost towards a speedy application for the recovery of her health. Her returning to the hot-well, as she talked of, would be the best resolution she could take. I find a very sensible benefit already by these waters. I would with pleasure meet her half-way, could I but know the time of her coming; but the fear of disobliging a lady of my acquaintance prevents me in the pleasure of waiting upon her at Carmarthen. Fairest, adieu!

LETTER LXXVII.

Miss Steele to a Friend in London.

Sir,

MY time and thoughts are so employed about my poor sister (who grows worse every day) that I could not sooner acknowledge the favour of your obliging letters. I have a true sense of what I owe you for the trouble you take in our affairs. I am glad you have brought the players * to such good terms; and I sincerely wish it may ever be as much in my power, as I am sure it will always be in my inclination, to shew my gratitude to you for the many favours and civilities you have conferred on my sister and self.

Your kind inquiry relating to Dan y park estate, is another instance of your friendship to me; but you will allow me the liberty to say, that I think the satisfaction given you so deficient, and so little to the purpose, that, from this moment, I take a resolution to put an absolute stop to that affair. Mr. George Harcourt's pretending to send to his uncle for the particulars of an estate to be settled upon him, which I was always made to believe was actually to be his by an old entail, and consequently out of his uncle's power to give from him, is so inconsistent with the account which my, or rather his, friends gave me of it, that I can no way account for it. There have been so many impositions in regard to Mr. Lewis Harcourt's estate detected, that I never repented any thing more, than that I was persuaded to enter at first into any treaty with Mr. George Harcourt. The first representations to me were, that all Mr. Lewis Harcourt's estate was entailed upon his nephew. In some time after, I was informed there was a mortgage of twelve hundred pounds upon his estate, which was a plain discovery that part of his estate was in his own power; and I believe you are convinced that two hundred pounds a year of his estate is settled on his

* Sir Richard Steele's interest in Drury-Lane Theatre became, after his death, the joint property of his two daughters, and, on the death of the younger of them, devolved to Elizabeth the elder, who sold it for no inconsiderable sum. But, as if a fatality attended the business, the attorney who received the money for her ran away with the whole, and she never received a penny.

daughters,

daughters. Now these are impositions of so gross and shocking a nature, that they are hardly to be paralleled. When Mr. Harcourt was introduced to me by Mrs. Bevan, Mrs. Lloyd of Danyralt, and Mr. Sandy, (all three my nearest relations) they told me he had an estate of eight hundred pounds a year; that he had a place of seven hundred pounds a year, which, with a chance of money from his aunt, was such a fortune as I could not disapprove. The uncommon merit of the gentleman was their daily theme: their perpetual and importunate solicitations were the first motives that induced me to think of it. Convinced by their reasoning that I might probably be happy in a change of my condition so much to my advantage, I submitted, and preferred their judgment to my own inclination; and things went on accordingly, when, to my great surprise, I found them very much mistaken in regard to his fortune. These things of themselves are very good and sufficient reasons for breaking off with Mr. Harcourt; but the melancholy circumstance I have to add is, that notwithstanding my endeavours, I find it is not in my power to have an affection for the gentleman, which a woman ought to have for the person she makes choice of for the companion of her life. I did all I could to make him sensible of this when last in the country. I have an aversion to the thoughts of it, which I can never overcome. It does not proceed from any want of merit in him; I think him very deserving; but we cannot command our affections; and I flatter myself that you, who are my friend, cannot find fault with me; for, if the regard is not mutual in marriage, the consequence must be miserable. I heartily wish cousin Harcourt all the happiness the state can afford in a better choice. I am apprehensive that my friends at Carmarthen, especially Mrs. Bevan and Mr. Sandy, will be irreconcileable on this occasion. It is very much my inclination to live with my relations, for nobody can have a greater tenderness for them than I have, and I propose great satisfaction in continuing with them; but, if they will not receive me, I must be content: I hope I am not so destitute of friends as to despair of a reception elsewhere.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mr. Meyricke to Miss Steele.

Tuesday morn.

I HOPE dear Miss Steele has enjoyed as good rest as I have wished her, for I have been awake the whole night in very thought for her repose and happiness. Yesterday's sun was the most tedious that ever shone; and I can scarce live another under the affliction you bear, unless you moderate it by the refined sense and reason you are mistress of; which, by abundance of good-nature, I fear you make more useful to your friends than yourself: yet, for pity sake, let not Mrs. Bevan, whom I must ever value, want any comfort from your persuasive, healing tongue. Pardon me, I would mention nothing but what I hope may concur with your sentiments. Do not, my charmer, by any means destroy your health, which is far more valuable to me than my life. My heart aches for you, and longs to tell you its sufferings. I want very much to see you, and would, if possible, more than share your grief. I could drink them tears which shower down so fast, the bitter affliction of my soul; but let me forget that ever there was affliction, pain, or sorrow, born into the world, and be for ever yours.

LETTER LXXIX.

Miss Steele to Mr. Meyricke.

Sir,

I AM surprised to find you persist in giving yourself and me a trouble which I have so often told you would be to no effect. As you are a gentleman of great merit, I wish you may be blessed with the best and most agreeable of the sex; but, for my own part, I am unalterably determined never to think of marrying you. Therefore I hope justice to yourself will prevail, when I make it my request, that you will from this moment desist from giving yourself, your friends, or me, any farther trouble on this occasion. I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER LXXX.

The Hon. John (afterwards Lord) Trevor To Miss Steele.

Dear Miss Steele,

THE general confirmation I meet with from all hands, that you have lately dismissed a gentleman esteemed the nearest your regard, persuades me to declare a passion which can rest no longer unrevealed, or more properly, unrepeated. But the good sense and discernment that distinguishes you from the multitude of your sex, will excuse a representation of the tragical tales of love; though this case is generally required to be as methodically stated to a fair lady, as a case of dangerous ill-health is to a physician. Without farther preamble, Madam, my design is to assure you, that you are the lady that, from all the laws of love, I have pictured in my imagination most agreeable; and every thing that is to be said upon this head is, "I love you." But though you will object that I tell almost every lady the same story; I grant I do, those I like; some have been so good as to believe me, and soften the care and concern that the most unchristian and unbelieving part of the sex hath created. But to none have I confessed the attraction of my soul so far, that I would, what shall I say? marry them. No: never was I so daring, so bold in thought, till the year 1729-30, and the 24th year of my age, when I was so fortunate or unfortunate, as you decree, to behold the resistless charms of the most engaging. But of this enough. I wish I could guess at what was the most prevailing passion in your breast. Give me leave then to consider you as a woman with a share and proportion of pride, but so much as is barely ornamental. Here vanity will naturally take place, and incline you to the love of wealth, honour, &c. You will then imagine that this comes from a blue, green, or red ribband, which is from neither. But every thing that is good and great, every joy and bliss, will be complete in him, when you are in his arms. If settlements are to take place, what I can offer will, I hope, be not unequal to your fortune, though inferior to your deserts. I wish Heaven had made me master of every thing you desire, that every inclination of yours might be satisfied. If you are disposed to think seriously on this point, there must be a provision for the younger children, which Providence will not fail, under honest industry, to bless us with. This is the first proposal I have ever made, and I may be unacquainted with the form; in which if I have erred, I hope you can have goodness enough in your heart to forgive your lover. But I must here take the additional name of friend, and earnestly exhort you as it concerns the duty of your religion, yourself, and all that is near and dear to you, never to marry a man that you cannot unite with even in soul. Here is the harmony, the bliss of a married state; which I most sincerely wish you happy in, though it ends in my own ruin. But this you are not to hope for, if you would violate a true passion with the consideration of riches, titles, or such glittering toys. The decrees of Heaven are against you, and cry aloud, Revenge! What remains for me is, to assure you, that, without vanity, I love myself exceeding well, and can heartily love you if you will do so too. Begin then to dispose yourself that way; consult Heaven, and ask whether your gratitude is not concerned. Arguments may be more prevailing from your generous temper, if you will use them, than any I can offer; and I believe you generous in every thing, but towards me. No news sticks to me, but of the sufferings of mankind. There is an unhappy gentleman, whom I dare not describe lest you should discover him, who is seemingly very restless in mind and temper, seeks amusement and diversion every evening in the several theatres of the Hay-market, and Drury-lane, &c. But the most harmonious elegance of the first seems an ungrateful discord; and even the wit and humour, with which your father has so happily furnished the latter, cannot divert his thoughts in the absence of his daughter. Who can be barbarous enough to laugh at misfortunes when they themselves have occasioned them? My passion is too singular to need a name, or to be imputed to any other than the slighted and unhappy POLYDORE.*

* Mr. Trevor was at this time one of his Majesty's justices of the grand sessions for the counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan; and was appointed one of the King's counsel, May 15, 1730. By his interest, Mr. Scurlock, an attorney, was made prothonotary of the above mentioned counties in January, 1729-30.

LETTER LXXXI.

Mr. Meyricke to Mrs. Lloyd.

Pontvane, Nov. 25, 1780.

Dear Cousin Lloyd,

SINCE I have been driven out of Paradise, I have long wandered up and down forlorn and desolate: at length have reached Pontvane, where my spirits are animated with a large glass of generous wine to your more generous health, and I am just supported by the delightful cordial of a healing and honest friendship. Having great confidence in John Trelogan, I have taken leave to send you six dozen of wine, carriage paid: it is the blushings of Milford, and, I hope, very good; but excuse me if I recommend it to be kept warm in straw, for it must not be chilled, or it will lose its true flavour and spirit. It savours so much of my own temper, that I would have it encouraged by a due proportion of warmth; and, in similitude, I am bold to say, it will prove very good upon trial. In the great inquietude of my soul, give me leave to return to the only subject I can think of. Recommend me to the sprightly boy William, who, I cannot forget, promised me his guardian care as a Cupid over the heart which he can only warm. Thou little God, dispose her as a reward to thy truest servant! Were the degrees of my affection less engaged, I should be less troublesome, but do, dear Madam, indulge me in common with my friends to complain, and favour me with your wishes; Heaven will reward you for it. Oh, I could dwell upon this subject eternally, but the different passions of love and despair torture me to madness! We are told that afflictions are sometimes sent from Heaven to direct us in our way thither; I wish I could bear them more calmly. Sighs and languishments are my allotment; but I thank Heaven, I have religion enough to adore the hand from whence they are sent. Methinks I am interrupted by your sudden appearance in the room, where an easy, good-natured, affable sweetness, stands gracefully recommended. Allow me Madam, most thankfully to own the civilities of your house, which I most heartily wish I could be so happy as to return to at London, Holland-house, or any other air that she could like. Sure, I could live for ever any where with her, but no where without her; but, living or dying, I shall be always in the deepest sense of obligation, dear Madam, your most truly obliged, affectionate cousin, and most obedient humble servant.

Every happiness attend your little family. My service waits on dear, dear Mrs. Bevan. If there was another pen to be had, I would endeavour to send you a fairer impression of the mind, always bad, but never, never worse than this, which you have goodness enough to excuse. You may, in some measure, read the disorder of my mind in the hurry of my hand.

LETTER LXXXII.

Mrs. Mary Scurlock to her Mother.

Dear Madam,

BY a letter I had from Cousin Betty Scurlock, I find you are resolved to winter in Wales, which is the cause of this speed in my writing, having kept a secret from you, through fear that a letter might (by the usual impertinent curiosity of people) make a discovery of what is proper for your own ear only, and not to divert any in that tattling place where that wretched impudence H. O. resorts, who (lest we should think God had not wholly forsaken him) had the boldness to send me a letter, which I had the very last post. I tore it without once reading it, he being beneath my scornful laugh.

But the matter in hand is this: Your frequent declarations of your earnest wishes that I might happily please you in obliging myself by my choice of a companion for life, has emboldened me, now fate has put it in my power, to give so far encouragement as to promise speedy marriage upon condition of your consent, which I do not question having, when I tell you I not only make use of the most weighing consideration I am mistress of, but also hope my inclination is the direction of Providence, whose guidance, in every particular of this nice affair more particularly, I cease not to implore continually. I cannot recommend the person to you as having a great estate, title, &c. which are generally a parent's chief care;

care; but he has a competency in worldly goods to make easy, with a mind so richly adorned as to exceed an equivalent to the greatest estate in the world, in my opinion: in short, his person is what I like; his temper is what I am sure will make you, as well as myself, perfectly happy, if the respect of a lover, with the tender fondness of a dutiful son, can make you so; and, for his understanding and morals, I refer you to his "Christian Hero," which I remember you seemed to approve. By this I believe you know his name; but, lest memory may not befriend me, it is the survivor of the person to whose funeral I went in my illness. Inquiries about him, any farther than I have made, are altogether needless, for I am fully satisfied, and do not question but you will be so when business will permit you to be an eye-witness and partaker of my happiness. In the mean time, what I desire is, your consent and blessing to my putting it out of my power to delay, and so perhaps to lose, my first and only inclination; for I shall never meet with a prospect of happiness if this should vanish. You doubtless wonder at the assurance of my style, for really I do myself; but then, if you consider the necessity of it, it will palliate the boldness. For, first, the distance between us is so great, that the speediest answer to a letter terminates an age of days; then the constant visits, in the form fit for a lover, make a mighty noise in an idle, prying neighbourhood; so will cause the uneasiness of an endless nine days wonder, as they call it. But the main matter of all, since Fate I believe has ordained him mine, is the neglect of his business, which his coming in the manner he does must cause. These considerations, with several more when known, though now too tedious to write, will, I hope, lessen the censure this comprehensive letter may at first sight cause.

There is nothing I should more desire than your presence at the giving my hand, with that part of my heart you can spare: but the misfortune of your lameness, if you were here, would deny me that happiness, unless public doings were intended, which is what I abhor; insomuch, if you consent to my changing the name of lover for husband, it shall not be in the power of the town to more than guess there may be such a thing, until your affairs will permit you to come and be a witness to our manner of living and appearing in the world, which God Almighty direct us in the way of, and also . . . . . this letter to your dutiful Molly; . . . . . there being no room for long consideration . . . . . understood.

LETTER LXXXIII.

*Mr. Steele to Mr. Addison.**

Sir, 1705.

You will be surprised, in the midst of a daily and familiar conversation, with an address which bears so distant an air as a public dedication: but to put you out of the pain which I know this will give you, I assure you I do not design in it, what would be very needless, a panegyric on yourself, or, what perhaps is very necessary, a defence of the play. In the one I should discover too much the concern of an author, in the other too little the freedom of a friend.

My purpose, in this application, is only to shew the esteem I have for you, and that I look upon the intimacy with you as one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life. At the same time, I hope, I make the town no ill compliment for their kind acceptance of this comedy, in acknowledging that it has so far raised my opinion of it, as to make me think it no improper memorial of an inviolable friendship.

I should not offer it to you as such, had I not been very careful to avoid every thing that might look ill-natured, immoral, or prejudicial to what the better part of mankind hold sacred and honourable.

Poetry, under such restraints, is an obliging service to human society; especially when it is used like your admirable vein, to recommend more useful qualities in yourself, or immortalize characters truly heroic in others. I am here in danger of breaking my promise to you, therefore shall take the only opportunity that can offer itself of resisting my own inclinations, by complying with yours. I am, Sir, your most faithful, humble servant.

* Prefixed to the Tender Husband, which was first acted in 1704, but not printed till 1705.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Mr. Pope to Mr. Steele.

June 18, 1712.

You have obliged me with a very kind letter, by which I find you shift the scene of your life from the town to the country, and enjoy that mixed state which wise men both delight in and are qualified for. Methinks the moralists and philosophers have generally run too much into extremes in commending entirely either solitude, or public life. In the former, men for the most part grow useless by too much rest; and in the latter, are destroyed by too much precipitation; as waters, lying still, putrify, and are good for nothing; and running violently on, do but the more mischief in their passage to others, and are swallowed up and lost the sooner themselves. Those, indeed, who can be useful to all states, should be like gentle streams, that not only glide through lonely valleys and forests, amidst the flocks and the shepherds, but visit populous towns in their course, and are at once of ornament and service to them. But there are another sort of people who seem designed for solitude; such, I mean, as have more to hide than to shew. As for my own part, I am one of those whom Seneca says, "*tam umbratiles sunt, ut* "*putent in turbido esse quicquid in luce* "*est.*" Some men, like some pictures, are fitter for a corner than a full light; and, I believe, such as have a natural bent to solitude (to carry on the former similitude) are like waters, which may be forced into fountains, and, exalted into a great height, may make a noble figure, and a louder noise; but, after all, they would run more smoothly, quietly, and plentifully, in their own natural course upon the ground. The consideration of this would make me very well contented with the possession only of that quiet which Cowley calls the companion of obscurity. But whoever has the Muses too for his companions, can never be idle enough to be uneasy. Thus, Sir, you see I would flatter myself into a good opinion of my own way of living. Plutarch just now told me, that it is in human life as in a game at tables, where a man may wish for the highest cast, but, if his chance be otherwise, he is even to play it as well as he can, and to make the best of it. I am your, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

Mr. Steele to Mrs. Bovey.

Madam, July 21, 1714.

It is an undisputed privilege writers are possessed of, to produce examples to the precepts they would enforce from the living characters of their contemporaries. You cannot, therefore, expect for ever to be doing laudable things, and for ever to escape applause. It is in vain, you find, that you have always concealed greater excellencies than others industriously present to view; for the world will know that your beauty, though in the highest degree of dignity and sweetness, is but a faint image of the spirit which inhabits the amiable form which Heaven has bestowed on you. It is observed, by all who know you, that, though you have an aspect and mien which draw the attention and expectation of all who converse with you, and a wit and good sense which surmount the great conceptions your person raises in your beholders, those perfections are enjoyed by you like gifts of common acceptation: that lovely and affable air expresses only the humility of a great and generous heart; and the most shining accomplishments, used by others to attract vulgar admiration, are serviceable to you only as they adorn piety and charity.

Though your person and fortune equally rise the admiration and ambition of our whole sex to move your attention to their importunities; your equal spirit entertains itself with ideas of a very different kind, and is solicitous to search for imperfections where it were the utmost injustice for any other to imagine any, and applauses only awaken you to an inquisition for errors.

It is with this turn of mind that, instead of assemblies and conversations, books and solitude have been your choice, and you have gone on in the study of what you should be, rather than attend to the celebration of what you are. Thus, with the charms of the fairest of your own sex, and knowledge not inferior to the most learned of ours, a closet, a bower, or some beauteous scene of rural nature, has constantly robbed the world of a lady's appearance, who never was beheld but with gladness to her visitants, nor ever admired but with pain to herself.

But

But a constant distribution of large charities, a search for objects of new bounty, and a skilful choice of modest merit, or suffering virtue, touch the souls of those who partake your goodness too deeply to be borne without inquiring for, and celebrating their benefactress. I should be loth to offend your tenderness in this particular; but I know, when I say this, the fatherless and the widow, the neglected man of merit, the wretch on the sick bed, in a word, the distressed under all forms, will from this hint learn to trace the kind hand which has so often, as from Heaven, conveyed to them what they have asked in the anguish of soul, when none could hear, but He who has blessed you with so ample a fortune, and given you a soul to employ it in his service.

If much more than what is here intimated be not the plain truth, it is impossible to come at what is so, since one can find none who speak of you who are not in love with your person, or indebted to your fortune. I wish you, as the completion of human happiness, a long continuance of being what you are; and am, Madam, your most obedient and most humble servant.

LETTER LXXXVI.

*Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Steele.**

Madam, [1715.]

If great obligations received are just motives for addresses of this kind, you have an unquestionable pretension to my acknowledgments, who have condescended to give me your very self. I can make no return for so inestimable a favour, but in acknowledging the generosity of the giver. To have either wealth, wit, or beauty, is generally a temptation to a woman to put an unreasonable value upon herself; but with all these in a degree which drew upon you the addresses of men of the amplest fortunes, you bestowed your person where you could have no expectations but from the gratitude of the receiver, though you knew he could exert that gratitude in no other returns but esteem and love. For which must I first thank you? for what you have denied yourself, or for what you have bestowed on me?

I owe to you, that for my sake you have overlooked the prospect of living in pomp and plenty, and I have not been circumspect enough to preserve you from care and sorrow. I will not dwell upon this particular; you are so good a wife, that I know you think I rob you of more than I can give, when I say any thing in your favour to my own disadvantage.

Whoever should see or hear you, would think it were worth leaving all the world for you; while I, habitually possessed of that happiness, have been throwing away impotent endeavours for the rest of mankind, to the neglect of her for whom any other man, in his senses, would be apt to sacrifice every thing else.

I know not by what unreasonable prepossession it is, but methinks there must be something austere to give authority to wisdom; and I cannot account for having only rallied many seasonable sentiments of yours, but that you are too beautiful to appear judicious.

One may grow fond, but not wise, from what is said by so lovely a counsellor. Hard fate, that you have been lessened by your perfections, and lost power by your charms!

That ingenuous spirit in all your behaviour, that familiar grace in your words and actions, has for these seven years only inspired admiration and love; but experience has taught me, the best counsel I ever have received has been pronounced by the fairest and softest lips, and convinced me that I am in you blest with a wise friend, as well as a charming mistress.

Your mind shall no longer suffer by your person; nor shall your eyes for the future, dazzle me into a blindness towards your understanding. I rejoice in this public occasion to shew my esteem for you; and must do you the justice to say, that there can be no virtue represented in all this collection for the female world, which I have not known you exert, as far as the opportunities of your fortune have given you leave. Forgive me, that my heart overflows with love and gratitude for daily instances of your prudent œconomy, the just disposition you make of your little affairs, your chearfulness in dispatch of them, your prudent forbearance of any reflections that they might have needed less vigilance had you disposed of your fortune suitably; in short, for all the arguments you every day give me of a generous and sincere affection.

It

* Prefixed to the third volume of "The Ladies Library."

It is impossible for me to look back on many evils and pains which I have suffered since we came together, without a pleasure which is not to be expressed, from the proofs I have had in those circumstances of your unwearied goodness. How often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head! how often anguish from my afflicted heart! with how skilful patience have I known you comply with the vain projects which pain has suggested, to have an aching limb removed by journeying from one side of a room to another! how often, the next instant, travelled the same ground again, without telling your patient it was to no purpose to change his situation! If there are such beings as guardian angels, thus are they employed. I will no more believe one of them more good in its inclinations, than I can conceive it more charming in its form, than my wife.

But I offend, and forget that what I say to you is to appear in public. You are so great a lover of home, that I know it will be irksome to you to go into the world even in an applause. I will end this without so much as mentioning your little flock, or your own amiable figure at the head of it. That I think them preferable to all other children, I know is the effect of passion and instinct; that I believe you the best of wives, I know proceeds from experience and reason. I am, Madam, your most obliged husband, and most obedient humble servant.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Dutchess Dowager of Somerset to Mrs. —

1754.

I AM sorry, good Mrs. ——, to find that your illness seems rather to increase than diminish; yet the disposition of mind with which you receive this painful dispensation, seems to convert your sufferings into a blessing: while you resign to the will of God in so patient a manner, this disease seems only the chastisement of a wise and merciful Being, who chasteneth not for his own pleasure, but for your profit. Were I not convinced of this great truth, I fear I must long since have sunk under the burden of sorrow, which God saw fit to wean my foolish heart from this vain world, and shew me how little all the grandeur and riches of it avail to happiness. He gave me a son,* who promised all that the fondest wishes of the fondest parents could hope: an honour to his family, an ornament to his country; with a heart early attached to all the duties of religion and society, with the advantage of strong and uninterrupted health, joined to a form, which, when he came into Italy, made him more generally known by the name of the "English Angel" than by that of his family. I know, this account may look like a mother's fondness; perhaps it was too much so once; but, alas! it now only serves to shew the uncertainty and frailty of all human dependence. This justly beloved child was snatched from us before we could hear of his illness; that fatal disease, the small-pox, seized him at Bologna, and carried him off the evening of his birth-day,† on which he had completed nineteen years. Two posts before, I had a letter from him, written with all the life and innocent chearfulness inherent to his nature; the next but one came from his afflicted governor,‡ to acquaint his unhappy father that he had lost the most dutiful and best of sons, the pride and hope of his declining age. He bore the stroke like a wise man and a Christian, but never forgot, nor ceased to sigh for it. A long series of pain and infirmity, which was daily gaining ground, shewed me the sword which appeared suspended over my head by an almost cobweb-thread long before it dropped.§ As to my bodily pains, I bless God, they are by no means insupportable at present; I rather suffer a languid state of weakness, which wastes my flesh and consumes my spirits by a gentle decay, than any frightful suffering, and am spending those remains of nature which were almost exhausted in continued care and anxiety for the sufferings of a person dearer to me than myself. My daughter,‖ who is very good to me,

* Lord viscount Beauchamp.

† September 11, 1744.

‡ Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Dalton was tutor to lord Beauchamp, but the "Supplement to the "Biographical Dictionary" (published in 1767) says, "a bad state of health prevented him from "attending his pupil on his travels abroad, and "saved him the mortification of being an eye-"witness of his death."

§ Algernon duke of Somerset died February 7, 1749-50.

‖ The countess (afterwards dutchess) of Northumberland.

has sent me her youngest son,* just turned of four years old, to amuse me in my solitude, because he is a great favourite of mine, and shews a great deal of his uncle's disposition, and some faint likeness of his person. It is high time to release you from so long a letter, but there are some subjects on which my tears and pen know not how to stop when they begin to flow. I am, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Rev. Mr. Dyer† to Mr. Duncombe.

Sir, Coningsby,‡ Nov. 24, 1756.

You have most agreeably increased my obligations: and it was very kind and ingenuous to inform me somewhat of yourself, as, in the generous freedom of your spirit, you broke through the little vulgarity of fashion, and wrote to one whom you never saw, and to one who has been long out of the world.

Your invitation is exceedingly engaging. The simplicity of your manner of life, and your regular hours, to me are luxuries. And how well do you set forth your entertainment in the names of Mr. Hawkins Browne and the author of Clarissa; and, if I am not mistaken, in those of Miss Carter and Miss Talbot!§ what a bill of fare! yet old Barzillai, though invited by David to the highest elegancies of life, held it vain to go to Jerusalem, when he could *no longer hear the voice of singing men and singing women*. Frailties also are troublesome in company —except in Frith-street, where they are carried into the arms of humanity. In spring, therefore, perhaps I may quit my solitude here, and venture abroad with an hundred infirmities upon my head; and sacrifice my vanity to one so benevolent as Mr. Duncombe.

. . . . I have not met with Dodsley's two last volumes, and have hitherto missed the pleasure of seeing the "Ode "to Health.‖" Though head-achs and sickness make me fearful of reading much, yet I will haste to see it; it will particularly suit me: I will seek it, as I seek health, which, alas! I very much want. Your humble servant is become a deaf, and dull, and languid creature; who, however, in his poor change of constitution being a little recompensed with the critic's phlegm, has made shift, by many blottings and corrections, and some helps from his kind friend Dr. Akenside, to give a sort of finishing to the "Fleece," which is just sent up to Mr. Dodsley; but as people are so taken up with politics, and have so little inclination to read any thing but satire and news-papers, I am in doubt whether this is a proper time for publishing it.

I have read none of the Connoisseurs —no papers reach this lonely place. I know not how the world goes—but with Mr. Hughes, as an author, I am well acquainted, and am glad that we are to have a fuller account of the life of so beautiful a poet.¶

Lord chancellor has been favourable to me. This living is 120l. *per ann.* The other, called Kirkby, 110l. But my preferments came in this course: Calthorp in Leicestershire, (80l. a year) was given me by one Mr. Harper in 1741. That I quitted in 1751 for a small living of 75l. called Bletchford, ten miles from hence, and given me by lord chancellor, through Mr. Wray's** interest. A year after, through the same interest, Sir John Heathcote gave me this, and lately procured me Kirkby of lord chancellor, without my solicitation. I was glad of this, on account of its nearness to me, though I think myself a loser by the exchange, through the expences of the seal, dispensations, journeys, &c. and the charge of an old house, half of which I

* Afterwards lord Algernon Percy.

† Author of "Grongar-hill," the "Ruins of "Rome," and "the Fleece."—Mr. Dyer was the second son of Robert Dyer, Esq. of Aberglasney, in Carmarthenshire, a solicitor of great capacity and note: he finished his school-studies at Westminster under Dr. Friend, from whence he was called away to be instructed in his father's profession; but disliking the law, and his father soon after dying, he settled himself with Mr. Richardson, painter, in Lincoln's-in-fields, being fond of the art of drawing from his childhood, and his imagination glowing and strong. He afterwards travelled into Italy for improvement, and at Rome formed the plan of his poem on its "ruins." At his return, ill health, his love of books, solitude, and reflection, induced him to enter into orders. He died in 1758, aged 58.

‡ Near Horncastle in Lincolnshire.

§ A mistake—probably for Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone.

‖ By Mr. J. Duncombe.

¶ In the "Biographia Britannica," by Dr. Campbell.

** Daniel Wray, Esq. one of the deputy-tellers of the exchequer, a friend to virtue and the muses.

am going to pull down. More of myself (which your good-natured curiosity draws from me) is this: after having been an itinerant painter in my native country (S. Wales), and in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, &c. &c. I married, and settled in Leicestershire. My wife's name was Ensor,* whose grandmother was a Shakespear, descended from a brother of every body's Shakespear. We have four children living; three are girls; the youngest a boy six years old. I had some brothers; have but one left. He is a clergyman,† lives at Marybone, and has such a house full of children as puts me in mind of a noted statue at Rome of the river Nile, on the arms, legs, and body of which are crawling, and climbing, ten or a dozen little boys and girls. Believe me to be, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Coningsby, Jan. 31, 1757.

WANT of health was a cause of not writing, that gave me concern. I hope it happens but seldom; and that it was owing to what makes most people out of order—bad weather; the ill effects of which, here at least, are general. I think I never was so weather-sick: the deep snows forbid me air and exercise; and my best medicine is a friend's letter. You see how much I am obliged to you.

Your son also I am obliged to: and I am under strong temptation—You are adding to my bill of fare. I feel your kind art in twisting and strengthening the silken cord, which, probably, in the spring, will draw me to town; where, I have reason to flatter myself, I shall see, what I so much like and covet, two or three chearful countenances, easy simplicity, and soft humanity; and, if a sweet female voice should come in, I am still able to hear the murmur of music, which I excessively love.

Your good liking of those verses, "Have my friends in the town,"‡ &c. should have been acknowledged in my last. I have a wicked memory: it is a great misfortune. Neither did I thank you for mentioning the new kind of trumpet—but I never use any; for, putting my hand to my ear, I can give it such a form as will increase my hearing. Besides, cold bathing, frequent and moderate exercise, frequent frictions of my head and ears, warm feet, warm water with my wine, and supperless nights, have much abated my deafness.

Mr. Dodsley indeed has the "Fleece." I did not think this a fit season for its publication; but my friend Mr. Wray overcame me; and though it has lain long "by" me, not much "before" me, it is now precipitated to the press, with such faults, as must be imputed to the air of a fenny country, where I have been, for the most part, above these five years, without health, without books, and without proper conversation. I say not this in any arrogant sense—for, God knows, I am far from despising either the peasant or the country parson.

Good Mr. Edwards § was my particular friend; even Mr. Wray cannot lament him more than I do. How seasonable are your presents! they have an additional beauty in being new to me. Even the "Rambler" has not reached this place; nor have the beams of his "Sunday"‖ ever shone upon me. You see what proofs I give you of being quite out of the world.

2.

No matter, no matter, content in the shades—
Contented! why every thing charms me!
Fall in tunes all adown the green steep, ye cascades,
'Till hence rigid virtue alarms me:

3.

'Till outrage arises, or misery needs
The swift, the intrepid avenger;
'Till sacred religion, or liberty, bleeds,
Then mine be the deed and the danger!

4.

Alas! what a folly, that wealth and domain
We heap up in sin and in sorrow!
Immense is the toil, yet the labour how vain!
Is not life to be over to-morrow?

5.

Then glide on my moments, the few that I have,
Sweet-shaded, and quiet, and even,
While gently the body descends to the grave,
And the spirit arises to heaven.

* Sister of Mr. Strong Ensor, of Warwickshire.

† Now yeoman of his majesty's almonry.

‡ The reader will not be displeased to find this beautiful "Epistle" here at large:

1.

HAVE my friends in the town, the busy gay town,
Forgot such a man as John Dyer?
Or heedless despise they, or pity the clown,
Whose bosom no pageantries fire?

§ Of Turrick, in Buckinghamshire, author of the "Canons of Criticism," &c. He died about three weeks before the date of this letter (on a visit) at Mr. Richardson's, at Parson's Green.

‖ An allegorical paper so signed, written by the late excellent Mrs. Catherine Talbot.

Most expressive, I am afraid, is that one word of yours, *fuimus*. . . . I am, Sir, your obliged humble servant.

LETTER XC.

Mr. Dyer to Mr. Duncombe.

Dear Sir, Coningsby, March, 19, 1757.

I WHO want so many apologies myself, must be ashamed to read any from you! but I too have been ill; and my coughs have been so continual and violent, that I dreaded the posture of writing: yet, though it gives me shame, it gives me also pleasure to observe, that your apology and inclination to a correspondence with me, shew your warm benevolence; for we, in the country, who see nothing but earth and sky, who hear nothing but the inarticulate voices of beasts and birds, cannot correspond with you in town upon an equal footing: wanting bustle and news, we can furnish only trifles in exchange, and must always depend upon your generosity; therefore the calling any letter from Coningsby "agreeable" gives me a clear view of your benevolence. . . . .

It is my wish, forgive me, that the gout may pay you many an annual visit. I would wish no such thing, were you a younger man, or did you not discover such a resignation as will ever preserve a relish for an useful life; and useful always is the life of every good man. So that I cannot imagine how so many of the wise and virtuous Romans, &c. could, in any circumstance, approve of self-killing —But my thoughts grow over-grave— it is no wonder, for I am now confined by illness—yet I can taste pleasure— and am rejoiced to hear, that the merits of my generous friend, your son, are so well taken notice of by our humane archbishop. I have been at Canterbury; it is an agreeable city, in a very pleasant country.

I never heard of any collection of letters by Mr. Edwards: yet there may be such: he gave all his studies a turn to criticism.

—Ah! just this moment the Stamford Mercury comes to me, and mentions the death of the good archbishop. Your son and all mankind have lost a friend. I am, Sir, your obliged humble servant.

LETTER XCI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Coningsby, Aug. 1, 1757.

IT grieves me that I cannot keep pace with your civilities—no, nor even acknowledge them in due time. Alas! in any thing, I can as ill acquit myself as a gouty man can dance; but it cannot be helped, I write to humanity.

The most agreeable parcel is at last sent me. I have run over the "Horace." I will next walk over it. After that, I will crawl over it—not so much to criticise, as to be luxurious over it; for it seems very correct.

Since Mr. Strahan has carried his translation* so far, it would be a great pity if age, or sickness, or the backwardness of his friends, should prevent the finishing of it.

Ah! the swallows—happy those who fly about Soho! But my wings are not only grown weak; they are even losing their feathers. I am afraid I shall never make one among them, though your invitations are most provokingly agreeable. I am so weak, and so much in pain, that this letter cannot be tiresomely long.

Believe me to be, &c.

LETTER XCII.

Rev. Mr. Meadowcourt† to Mr. Duncombe.

Dear Sir, Worcester, July 10, 1758.

I AM very much obliged to you for remembering a person who has been so long out of sight, and for giving me so acceptable a token of your remembrance as

* Of "the Æneid."

† Prebendary of Worcester. On May 29, 1716, as this gentleman (then Batchelor of Arts, and Fellow of Merton-college) was drinking the King's and other loyal healths at the Constitution-club at Oxford, in company with several Officers of the army, they were visited by the sub-proctor, whom Mr. M. requested to drink King George's health with them. For these "affronting and improper words," (as they were termed) Mr. M. was put (by the proctor) into the "black book," and was sentenced to be kept back from his degree of Master of Arts for two years. Nor could he then obtain it (as he refused publicly to acknowledge the heinousness of his crime, and the lenity of his sentence), but by pleading his Majesty's act of grace. On the same day, in the year 1719, Mr. M. again distinguished himself, by complaining to the vice-chancellor of a seditious sermon, preached before the university, by Mr. Warton, professor of poetry.

as the first volume of your "Horace." To the dishonour of this place, there are no booksellers, and but few readers of books here. Most of the clergy, especially the incumbents on cushions in a cathedral, have finished their studies before they are lifted into preferment. Worldly cares, or worldly enjoyments, too active, or too passive, a life, often lead them too far astray from literary pursuits.

I am glad to find the Bishop of Kildare* mentioned among your friends, as I am sure that his friendship must yield you the highest satisfaction. Every good and agreeable quality meet together in his character, without the least mixture of any thing bad. Nothing is wanting in him but better health, which is sometimes in such a state as to occasion extreme pain to himself, and no less concern to all who know him.

The account you have heard of my being much addicted to the peripatetic sect is a true account. But it is in winter, and in the cool seasons, that I venture on walks of any considerable length. He who travels on foot has an opportunity of wandering from hill to hill, from stream to stream, and from one rich valley to another; of dwelling on lovely landscapes and delicious scenes; and of seeing numberless objects and numberless places, which are inaccessible to the horseman, and never were seen by any one whirled through the country in the state-prison of a coach. For these and many other reasons, I chuse to make use of my own legs, and prefer the wholesome exercise of walking to all the modes of conveyance which effeminacy and luxury can invent. If I live to take another philosophical journey on foot to London, Mr. Duncombe in Frith-street, may depend on hearing me knock at his door.

My place of residence, during the summer months, is almost twenty miles from hence, *in reductâ valle*,

Qua pinus ingens albaque populus
Umbram hospitalem consociare amant ramis.

Here my days pass away in peace, undisturbed by ambition and envy, not altogether devoted to solitude, nor too often interrupted by social visits. I rejoice here in the works of my hands, which are constantly employed in forming a wood into walks, in nursing a thicket of shrubs, and in adding the improvements of art to those of nature in a most delightful situation.† Was it not for such amusements as these, accompanied with the entertainments of books, I should probably be found at the foot of Parnassus, courting the Muses, and catching at some of the poetical spirit which is still indulged to you. May it long be indulged to you, and be ever attended with satisfaction and success! These are not the compliments, but the sincere wishes, of, dear Sir, your most obliged and faithful humble servant.

I can give you but a bad account of any thing I have published of late years.‡ Mr. Sandby, bookseller, in Fleet-street, may, perhaps, have reason to give you a worse.

LETTER XCIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Worcester, Dec. 4, 1758.

IT is owing to a long excursion from home, and a more tiresome attendance on an audit, which is here an occasion of much collegiate festivity, that I am so late in acknowledging the favour of your letter, and in thanking your son for his very acceptable present.‖ No author who finds himself praised in print can be more delighted than I was, in finding proper justice done in the "Feminead" to the characters of Mrs. Madan and

poetry. The vice-chancellor, who had at first refused to take cognizance of it, being commanded by the lords justices to proceed against the preacher, the affair ended with Mr. Warton's deposing upon oath that "he had lost his notes." For an abstract of the sermon, see Amherst's "*Terræ filius*," numb. 15. A stall at Worcester was, some years after, the reward of Mr. Meadowcourt's loyalty. He died in 1760.

* Dr. Fletcher. He died at Dublin in 1761. His two younger brothers were successively Deans of Kildare.

† This gentleman, while he was fellow of Merton-college, had a very elegant garden there.

‡ In particular, "A critical Dissertation, with "notes, on Milton's Paradise Regained, 1748."

‖ The "Feminead, or Female Genius, a poem." The ladies there celebrated, are Mrs. Catherine Philips, Anne countess of Winchelsea, Mrs. Cockburne, Mrs. Rowe, Frances dutchess dowager of Somerset, Anne viscountess Irwin, Mrs. Wright, (sister to Mr. Wesley) Mrs. Madan, Mrs. Leapor, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Brooke, Miss Ferrar, (afterwards Mrs. Peckard) Miss Pennington of Huntingdon, Miss Mulso, (afterwards Mrs. Chapone) and Miss Highmore, afterwards married to the author.

Miss

Miss Carter, who have ever been my favourite heroines in verse. The spirit which animates the poems of these two ladies seems transfused into Mr. Duncombe's. His Muse is a Muse of sound judgment as well as strong sense. She is never unintelligible in her flights, never hides her head *inter nubila* and never *serpit humi*.

I am glad to hear that you spent part of the last summer at Stocks. You seem doubtful whether I have ever been at that agreeable place. Mrs. Duncombe can tell you that I was once a troublesome guest there, on your nephew Lewis's invitation, for more than a fortnight, and during that time had great satisfaction in visiting Mr. Gore's family at Tring, and my worthy friend Dr. Cowper at Berkhamsted. The beech-woods, the lawns, the hills, the well-watered valleys, and the extensive views of the country round Aylesbury, are still strongly impressed on my mind. The last visit I paid your brother, was the last visit I wished to pay, as I came thither, at his request, with the remains of a most amiable and hopeful youth, and saw them laid in the grave. His loss, and the loss of Dr. Cowper, have made me a voluntary exile from that part of Hertfordshire, which, with all its charms, can hold forth nothing inviting to, dear Sir, your most affectionate and obliged humble servant.

LETTER XCIV.

*Joseph Ward, Esq. * to Mr. Highmore.*

Dear Sir, Willington, near Derby, July 13, 1761.

On Monday last I saw an account of the death of Mr. Richardson. You have lost a valuable friend, and the world an ingenious man. I know no modern author that was a greater master of the passions than he was, or had a greater insight into human nature.

—— Meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut magus, et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.†

* Barrister at law. He died in 1767.

† 'Tis he who gives my breast a thousand pains,
Can make me feel each passion that he feigns,
Enrage, compose, with more than magic art,
With pity or with terror tear my heart,
And snatch me o'er the earth, or through the air,
To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

POPE.

I have somewhere read, but where I cannot tell, that Dr. Harvey (who discovered the circulation of the blood) was so delighted in reading Virgil, that he would sometimes fling the book away, and say "it had a devil." I confess, in reading Clarissa, which I take to be Mr. R.'s capital performance, and seeing her piety, purity, and delicacy so ill used by a Lovelace, I have been scarce able to pacify myself, till I have recollected that this scene, so artfully worked up, had no other existence than in Mr. Richardson's fancy or imagination.‡ I am obliged to him, for he hath contributed much to my entertainment, and I hope I may say, to my improvement; for I have many times thought I have returned from reading him a better man than I was before I began. How can a man be better employed than by instructing mankind, and making them wiser and better than they otherwise would be? To this good end I cannot but think his writings greatly conducive, except some scenes in Pamela and Clarissa, which, I confess, I have sometimes thought had better been left out. I am your most obedient humble servant.

LETTER XCV.

Rev. Mr. Spence || to the Rev. Mr. James Ridley, § after the publication of the first four numbers of the "Tales of the Genii."

June 1764.

Why flutterest thou so, O my heart? And why art thou at the same time so delighted and so distressed.

‡ "Mr. Richardson," says Lord Corke, in one of his letters, "draws tears from every eye. "It is impossible to take up his works, without quitting the thoughts of every thing else, "and travelling with him wherever he pleases "to carry us."

|| Prebendary of Durham, &c.

§ This pathetic and elegant moralist, eldest son of the Rev. Dr. Ridley, prebendary of Salisbury, (a name now doubly endeared to Englishmen and Protestants) died in February 1765, a few days after the publication of the last number of his Genii. So generous a heart, such an intimate knowledge of the powers and workings of nature, so serious and earnest a desire to serve God and mankind, with a cheerful spirit and address in conveying his instructions, make his loss as great to the public as it was to his family and friends. A humorous paper, called the "Schemer," first published in the London Chronicle, and since collected into a volume, was also written by him.

The

The rays of thy brightness, O Horam, the son of Asmar, have penetrated my most retired recesses, and thy doctrines have descended upon me, like the dews of the morning, clad in all the colours that the sun can give.

How shall I express the joys that have devoured me? Or how shall I sufficiently return my thanks to the most moral and the most illuminated of the sons of men?

The poor "Dervise of the Groves" has nothing to return but prayers; and his prayers shall be lifted up for thee in the evening, and in the morning, and at noon-day.

Mayest thou continue to leap over the boundaries of nature like a roe! and rise into the highest regions of splendor, as the eagle that delighted in soaring toward the sun!

May thy instructions sink into the heart of mortals! and render them in due time, as great and good as the immortal Genii with whom thou dost so intimately converse!

These are the prayers of Phesoj Ecneps,* the "Dervise of the Groves," for the most moral and most illuminated of the sons of men.

LETTER XCVI.

Mr. Warburton† to the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

London,
Rev. and worthy Sir, April 19, 1738.

I FOUND the very agreeable favour of your letter of the 13th instant in London, where I am lately come for a few days.

I can now easily forgive the *Country Clergyman*,‡ as owing to him, in some measure, the acquisition of such a friendship as I flatter myself, Sir, to reap in you. And though you give so polite a turn to that occasion, I must never suffer myself to believe, that it was any merit in my book, but a generous indignation against an abandoned libeller, that has procured me the honour of so considerable a patroniser.

I will assure you, Sir, that, next to the service of truth, my aim in writing was to procure myself the favour and friendship of good and learned men. So that you will not wonder that I accept the friendship you are pleased to offer me in so generous and polite a manner, with all the pleasure that gifts most esteemed amongst men are generally received with. Difference of religious persuasion, amongst sincere professors, never was, I thank God, any reason of restraining or abating my esteem for men of your character in life and learning.

I have read your proposals for the Family Expositor, and have entertained, from the specimen, so high an opinion of your notes and paraphrase, that had I any thing material on the gospels, I should be very cautious, (without affectation) of laying them before so accurate a critic, notwithstanding all the temptations I should have of appearing in so honourable a station. But the truth is, I have little of this kind on the evangelists worth your notice, and your work is already in the press: but you shall be sure to command what I have on the other parts of the New Testament on occasion, if of any service to you. In the mean time, I make it my request to be admitted in the list of your subscribers. I shall pay the subscription money to Mr. Hett, but shall take no receipt, because I would have one from yourself, in order to engage you to begin a correspondence from which I expect to receive so much benefit and pleasure.

I am greatly indebted to you, Sir, for your good prayers. I beg you would do me the justice to believe you do not want mine, being with the utmost esteem and sincerity, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant.

LETTER XCVII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Cambridge, April 4, 1739.

I write to you amidst a strange mixture of entertainments and study between the college-halls and libraries. The necessity of consulting books only to be

* Mr. Spence's name backward. See tale the ninth, entitled "Merglip the Persian, or "Phesoj Ecneps, the Dervise of the Groves," in which the author has taken occasion to commemorate, in like manner, many other friends.

† Afterwards Bishop of Glocester.

‡ In January 1737-8, Mr. Warburton published the first volume of the Divine Legation of Moses, &c. and in March, a Vindication of the author of that work, from the aspersions of the Country Clergyman's Letter in the Weekly Miscellany of Feb. 14, 1737. The professed editor of the Miscellany was William Webster, D. D.

be met with here, has brought me to Cambridge; but my long nights in company make my mornings by myself so very short, that I am likely to return as wise as I came; which will be in a few days.

Before I left the country, I had the pleasure of receiving your Family Expositor. My mother and I took it by turns. She, who is superior to me in every thing, aspired to the divine learning of the improvements, while I kept grovelling in the human learning in the notes below. The result of all was, that she says she is sure you are a very good man, and I am sure you are a very learned one. I sat down to your notes with a great deal of malice, and determined resolution not to spare you. And let me tell you, a man who comments on the Bible affords all the opportunity a caviller could wish for. But your judgment is always so true, and your decision so right, that I am as unprofitable a reader to you as the least of your flock.

A friend of mine, Dr. Taylor of Newark, (M. D.) who has seen your book, desires to be a subscriber. If you will be so good to order a book to be left for him at Mr. Gyles's, he has orders to pay for it.

I have taken the liberty to inclose two or three papers of proposals, just now offered to the public by my friend Dr. Middleton, for his Life of Tully. I am, dear Sir, your very affectionate friend and brother.

LETTER XCVIII.

Mr. Warburton to Dr. Doddridge.

Dear Sir, May 28, 1741.

THIS day sevennight Mr. Gyles gave Mr. Fowler himself the remaining sheets, which I suppose you have received by this time.

After an extremely fatiguing journey in the stage coach with very indifferent company, increased by worse taken up on the road, I reached Mr. Gyles's between eight and nine last night.

I have abundance of thanks to return for the very friendly entertainment I met with at Northampton, from you and your excellent lady. I must tell you frankly, you have more happiness than comes to the share of one man, and to make it the more exquisite, of several kinds. Providence has treated you with a feast of many courses; which none but a good Levite under the old law, when the dispensation was exact, could fairly pretend to. That you may long enjoy every part of it, especially "that last and best—which shares and doubles all the rest," is the earnest prayer of, dear Sir, your most affectionate brother and friend.

LETTER XCIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Feb. 14, 1742-3.

I SHOULD not have been so long in making my best acknowledgments for your last kind letter, had not my absence from home, and a late unhappy domestic affair, prevented me and engrossed all my thoughts—the misfortunes of an excellent sister and her children, by her husband's ill success in trade, yet attended to with the utmost honesty and sobriety; so that, to his own ruin, he has been a considerable benefactor to the public while in trade, and his creditors at last no losers, but himself undone. I do not know whether this be an alleviation or aggravation of the misfortune. But I can tell you with the utmost truth, that I share with this distressed sister and her children (who all live with me) the small revenue it has pleased God to bless me with, with much greater satisfaction than others spend theirs on their pleasures. I do not know how it is, but though I am far from being an hero, yet I find Brutus expresses my exact sentiments, when he says to Cicero, *Aliter alii cum suis vivunt. Nihil ego possum in Sororis meæ Liberis facere, quo possit expleri voluntas mea, aut officium.* But you will reprove me I know for this false modesty in apologizing for this comparison; and say, where is the wonder, that a man who pretends to be a christian should not come behind a pagan, how great soever in the performance of moral duties. However this may be, I can assure you my only concern on this occasion was for an incomparable mother, whom I feared the misfortunes of a favourite daughter would have too much affected. But, I thank God, religion, that religion which you make such amiable drawings of in all your writings, was more than a support to her. But I ask pardon for talking so long of myself. This is a subject I never choose

choose to talk of, yet I could not forbear mentioning it to a man I so much esteem, and whose heart I know to be so right.

It was with great concern I found Mrs. Doddridge so ill at Bath. I know the grief this must have occasioned you. But I know your sufficiency. I trust in God she has by this time received the expected benefit from the waters. It was by accident I saw her name in Leake's book (for then I had not received your last) a little before I left Mr. Allen's. I visited her twice. The first time she was going out to drink the waters, the second time a visiting: so I had not the pleasure of much of her company. You may be assured, I would not hinder her the first time; and I made a conscience not to do it the second: for it was a new acquaintance she was going to make; a matter perhaps as useful to her amusement, while she stayed at Bath, as the other for her health.

Thus you see, my good friend, we have all something to make us think less complacently of the world. Religion will do great things. It will always make the bitter waters of Marah wholesome and palatable. But we must not think it will usually turn water to wine, because it once did so. Nor is it fit it should, unless this were our place of rest where we were to expect the bridegroom. I do the best I can, and should, I think, do the same, if I were a mere pagan, to make life passable. To be always lamenting the miseries of it, or always seeking after the pleasures of it, equally takes us off from the work of our salvation. And though I be extremely cautious what sect I follow in religion, yet any in philosophy will serve my turn, and honest Sancho Panca's is as good as any; who on his return from an important commission, when asked by his master whether they should mark the day with a *black* or a *white* stone; replied, 'Faith, Sir, if you will be ruled by me, with neither, but with good *brown ochre*. What this philosopher thought of his commission, I think of human life in general, *good brown ochre* is the complection of it.

I got home a little before Christmas, after a charming philosophical retirement in a palace with Mr. Pope and Mr. Allen for two or three months. The gentleman I mentioned last is, I verily believe, the greatest private character that ever appeared in any age of the world. You see his munificence to the Bath-Hospital. This is but a small part of his charities, and charity but a small part of his virtues. I have studied his character even maliciously, to find where his weakness lies; but have studied in vain. When I know it, the world shall know it too for the consolation of the envious; especially as I suspect it will prove to be only a partiality he has entertained for me. In a word, I firmly believe him to have been sent by Providence into the world, to teach men what blessings they might expect from heaven, would they study to deserve them.

I received your agreeable present of your Pupil's Sermons,* with your Life of him, which my nephew has read with great pleasure, and you have both our most hearty thanks for it. He is now of Jesus College in Cambridge. But I take what care I can myself of his education. He is very promising, and I hope will prove a comfort to an excellent, though unfortunate mother.

Dr. Taylor has just now shewn me the first part of your excellent answer to Christianity not founded on argument; which he highly esteems, and we wait impatiently for the second.

Will you forgive my concluding without overlooking this sad scribble, which I should be even afraid to do had I time. But now I have not a moment more than to conclude, with my best respects to Mrs. Doddridge, dear Sir, your most affectionate and faithful friend and brother.

LETTER C.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Prior-Park, Sept. 2, 1751.

Your kind letter gave me, and will give Mr. Allen, great concern; but for ourselves, not you. Death, whenever it happens, in a life spent like yours, is to be envied, not pitied, and you will have the prayers of your friends, as conquerors have the shouts of the crowd. God preserve you; if he continues you here, to go on in his service; if he takes you to himself, to be crowned with glory.

Be assured the memory of our friendship will be as durable as my life. I

* By the Rev. Mr. Thomas Steffe.

order

order an inquiry to be made of your health from time to time; but if you fatigue yourself any more in writing, it will prevent me that satisfaction. I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate friend and brother.

LETTER CI.

Dr. Doddridge to a Young Gentleman, on his recovery from a dangerous illness.

Dear Sir, 1740.

THOUGH I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with you, I think it not improbable, that you have learnt my name from your excellent parents, who honour me with their friendship in a degree far beyond what I could ever pretend to have deserved. They early informed me of your illness, and recommended you to my earnest and affectionate prayers; which, I will assure you, dear Sir, you have had, and shall continue to have a share in them. God has been gracious to us, and heard our prayers. He has brought you back from the borders of the grave, when you had received the sentence of death in yourself. And now, my dear friend, for so methinks I have a kind of hereditary right to call you, give me leave seriously to remind you of the goodness of God in this respect, and to call upon you in his name to a proper improvement of it. I doubt not, but in the intervals of your disorder, you had some solemn thoughts of death and eternity. I doubt not, but you cried to God, and formed some purposes for his service. But I know how ready our treacherous hearts are to forget such deliverances, and to forget those vows of God that are upon us; and therefore let me, with all simplicity and plainness, though at the same time with the sincerest respect, renew the admonition as in the name of my great Lord and Master, who, I would hope, means you graciously in inclining me to write to you upon this occasion. I would beseech you seriously to examine your heart and ways, and to ask yourself before God, "What if the fever had finished its work, and brought me down to the dust of death, and my spirit had returned to God who gave it, how would it have been received by him?" You are descended from the most gracious pair that I think I ever knew. But they cannot convey grace to you. Even from them, excellent as they are, you derive a corrupt nature. Ask your own heart then, "Have I been ever earnest with God for renewing grace? Have I ever pleaded with him in prayer, that I might experience that change which the gospel requires, without which no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven?" These are matters of infinite importance; which must lie at the root of all our hopes of heaven, or those hopes will prove like a spider's web. I beseech you therefore, dear Sir, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by all your prospects in the eternal world, that you take these things under an attentive consideration. I hope you have thought of them. I would fain persuade myself to believe, you are experimentally acquainted with them. But I would court you to apply your heart to them more and more. I know, Sir, that in your circumstances of life innumerable temptations will surround you; and it is a good thing, in order to be fortified against them all, that the heart be established with grace. You have all the encouragement you can desire, to attempt the work of serious religion, and that betimes; for it must be done immediately, or perhaps it may not be done at all, probably it will not. You have a gracious God to go to, who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. You have a most compassionate Redeemer, who shed his blood for the salvation of perishing sinners; and I humbly hope for your salvation. The spirit of God has conquered hearts much harder than yours can be, even supposing you are now in an unrenewed state. You are the seed of God's servants: you were early devoted to God in baptism: you have a large stock of prayers laid up in the presence of God for you. I do really apprehend, even the covenant of God with believing parents bears a favorable aspect upon their children: and though I dare not say, nor think, that it secures their salvation; for I fear fact lies strongly against such a presumption, as we are sure it did even is the children of Abraham; yet there in some peculiar encouragement for such to seek the God of their Fathers. I believe the Spirit strives peculiarly with them; and that when they seek it, it is more immediately and more fully communicated to them than generally

generally to others. And sure I am, that those early instructions they have received, have often a blessed resurrection in their hearts, even after they have been long forgotten; and the seed, which seemed to have perished, often brings forth fruit in abundance. And therefore, dear Sir, thank God and take courage. In his name and strength, set out in your heavenly pilgrimage, with the word of God in your hand and heart, and with your eyes to the Spirit of God, as your guide and strength: and be assured, there are many who will bid you good speed in the name of the Lord, and will rejoice to assist you in your course. I am not without hope, that our gracious God may at length favour me with more immediate and renewed opportunities of serving you.* In the mean time be assured, that I most cordially love you, though personally unknown. Be assured, my heart overflows with a true concern for your welfare; that I pour out my soul before God in prayer on your account; and that to hear of your health and happiness, and above all that your soul prospers, will yield me unutterable delight; for I am not merely in form, but with the utmost sincerity and tenderness of heart, dear Sir, your most faithful and affectionate friend, and humble servant.

LETTER CII.

Dr. Doddridge to Sir J. ———.

Dear Sir, Northampton, Dec. 8, 1742.

PERMIT me frankly to speak my mind to you on a head, on which I fear to be silent, lest I should fail in a branch of duty and gratitude to a gentleman to whom I think myself obliged, and whom I would gladly serve to the best of my little ability. Be not angry, when I tell you, I was heartily grieved at the liberties you took last night in using the venerable name of the Ever Blessed God in so light a manner; and in the needless appeals which you made to him, as to things which would have been believed on much less evidence than the word of Sir J. ——. I have not heard so much of that kind of language, except when passing by people of low education in the streets, for some years; whether it be owing to the complaisance with which gentlemen commonly treat our profession, or, as I rather hope, to a sense of what is in itself reasonable and decent.

I am sure, Sir, that your knowledge of men and things is capable of making conversation pleasant and improving, and of filling up your full share in it without these dreadful expletives; for dreadful I must call them, when considered in a view to that strict account which must so certainly, and so quickly, be rendered up to God for all our words as well as our actions. I was the more solicitious, Sir, to mention the affair to you in consideration of your office as a magistrate; the dignity of which must certainly be most effectually supported by avoiding whatever it might require you to punish in others. In this view, Sir, permit me to entreat you to join your efforts with those of all other wise and good men to discountenance, and, if possible, to drive out of the world this unprofitable enormity of swearing in common conversation; concerning the evil of which, I am sure it is not necessary to enlarge, when addressing myself to a gentleman of your good understanding.

I conclude, Sir, with my most affectionate good wishes and prayers for you, that the whole of your conduct in every circumstance of life, may be such as will yield the most pleasing reflections in the awful hour of death, and the most comfortable account before the divine tribunal, to which we are hastening; and in the serious views of which, I have presumed to give you this trouble, hoping you will esteem it, as it undoubtedly is, a proof that I am with great sincerity, honoured Sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant.

LETTER CIII.

Dr. Oliver to Dr. Doddridge.

Good Sir, Bath, November 12, 1744.

I RETURN you my hearty thanks for the kind present you have made me of the two volumes of your Family Expositor. Writing books which may make men wiser and better; improve the mind, and correct the heart; is surely the noblest effort of the human faculties! It is the most diffusive beneficence we are capable of; it not only blesses our contemporaries, but extends its happy influence to

* He afterwards became the Doctor's pupil.

to the most distant posterity! How unlike the glory of heroes and conquerors, is the glory of the author of such writings! How infinitely superior! How much more solid and secure his possession of it, which no turn of fortune, no accident can destroy; and which all the tyrants upon earth cannot ravage from him. But how different will their meditations be on the bed of sickness and languishing! What comfort will these great destroyers of mankind then feel from reflecting on the millions of their fellow-creatures who have fallen sacrifices to their ambition, pride, or avarice; whom they will dread to meet in the world they are going to! What hope, what joyous consolation, shall the good man feel in that trying moment, who has a well-grounded confidence, that he is just entering into a world of spirits, where he shall be received with the acclamations of multitudes; whom he will find enjoying the good effects of his pious labours! I do not doubt, Sir, but you will be this happy man; and long may you continue to labour to secure to yourself this great, this unspeakable felicity! May the dear partner of all your joys long share them with you in health and chearfulness, to which I think myself happy to have in the least contributed. I beg you will make her my best compliments, and believe me, with true respect, Sir, your most obliged and obedient servant.

Be pleased to present my humble service to Dr. Stonhouse. A letter of his is just come to my hands, by which I perceive that his kindness to our hospital has been shamefully neglected, but I will answer it very soon.

LETTER CIV.

The Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Secker) to the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

Rev. Sir, Cuddesden, Sept. 29, 1743.

I RETURN you many thanks for your favourable opinion both of my sermon and its author, though expressed in a manner, which you would have forborn, if you had known me better. Plain men should be treated in a plain way: and nobody should have things said to him, which he doth not deserve: and ought not to hear if he did. Let us all endeavour to do what good we can: and give those who seem to endeavour it faithfully, the comfort of knowing we think they do, but never tempt one another to forget we are unprofitable servants. I am in no danger of transgressing this rule, when I say, that I have read your works with great satisfaction, and I hope some benefit: and both rejoice and wonder, that in the midst of your other occupations you continue able, as I pray God you long may, to oblige your fellow-christians so often and so highly from the press. Indeed it must and ought to be owned in general, that the dissenters have done excellently of late years in the service of christianity; and I hope our common warfare will make us chiefly attentive to our common interest, and unite us in a closer alliance. I believe, on the best inquiry I can make, that what I have said in favour of our charity-schools is true. And you do very well to propagate a sense of religion amongst your own people by the same method. I have read Dr. Watts's Essay on the subject, which fell into my hands but yesterday, with much pleasure, and a little surprise, to see in how many points we have coincided: an evidence I presume, that we are both in the right. I congratulate you heartily on the prospect you have of success in your hospital: and as I am very sensible of what peculiar advantage it would be to have one at Oxford, so I have not only taken all opportunities of expressing and inculcating my opinion, but should long before now have made some trial what could be done in the matter; if hopes had not been given me, that Dr. Radcliffe's trustees, when his library is finished, will employ some part of the residue of his money in this excellent work. You were much to blame in not letting me see you at Glocester; and the Bishop, when he knows it, will be as sorry as I am, that you passed by us in the manner you did. The time of my being in town and that of your coming thither, I am afraid are different. But if any occasion bring you near me, either there or here, I beg you will not think you need any introducer: for I am with great esteem and regard, Rev. Sir, your very humble servant.

LETTER CV.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Secker) to the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

Rev. Sir, Lambeth, July 21, 1749.

I HAVE been, since I received your letter, in a very disagreeable situation, moving my family to Lambeth.

I have a very true regard and honour for you, and shall be most sincerely glad to see you, whenever your affairs bring you to London. I have objection but to two days within the time you mention, from the 24th instant, to the 10th of August, which are Wednesday July 27, and the Saturday following. I am always at home, and the sooner my friends call upon me in the morning so much the better. I am at leisure constantly by nine.

I must beg the favour of you to give my service to Mr. and, if you please, Mrs. West. I cannot go to settle at Croydon this summer, for reasons very apparent to a man that knows any thing of cleaning and furnishing houses, called palaces. I am, with most sincere esteem, Reverend Sir, your obliged and assured friend.

LETTER CVI.

Dr. Doddridge to the Rev. Mr. Wood of Norwich.

Northampton,
My dear Friend, Oct. 13, 1748.

YOUR letters, wise and good and kind, as they were cordial indeed, and felt as such, had perhaps remained some weeks longer unanswered, if another had not reached me by the last post, on such an occasion as would admit of no delay; but which, tenderly as you have adjusted the matter, necessarily upbraids my former silence, and makes me quite ashamed of it. Yet sure I am, you would pity me if you knew what I am necessitated to write. Indeed I spend so much time with my pen in my hand, that I am astonished at my own health, which was never better, excepting a pain in my right hand, which grasping the pen so much has occasioned, and by which I sometimes fear lest any tendon be strained, or perhaps contracted: yet, I thank God, it seldom affects any motion but that which seems to have produced it. Only, my good friend, remember this when I seem ungrateful to so much goodness as yours; which I really think, frequent and constant as my addresses to the throne of grace for you are, and tenderly as my heart interests itself in all the concerns of your health, usefulness, and comfort, I do not, and cannot, by any means, suitably repay.

Now I have begun I could write to you all day, and fill a great many sheets, were I to indulge my own inclinations; but as I know I have but a few minutes to write in, I must use them to the most material purpose that I can. But I cannot come to the important and affecting occasion and subject of your last, till I have congratulated you and your good lady on your recovery and the re-establishment of your health to such a degree; in which I adore that God, who hears prayers, for his compassion to me and to his church. Tenderly did I wait every circumstance of information, during the time of your dangerous illness; and one way or another, so kindly did Providence order it, I had more frequent intelligence relating to you, than I ever had in double that time before or since. I doubt not but your resolutions for the service of God, your deliverer and your saviour, are renewed; and I rejoice in the support he gave you, and the mercy he has wrought out for you, methinks as if my life and soul were in the place of yours.

But I will now, lest I leave not myself room to do it, condole with you and your friends at Woodbridge, on the death of that worthy and excellent servant of Christ, your uncle. Mr. Barker had informed me of the affecting providence by Mr. Ashworth, from whom I received the news of it near a week ago, and had desired me to advise the people to a suitable minister if I could. Truly, I think Mr. K—— a very suitable one, if they have no objection to a Baxterian Calvinist (which, by the way, I think a very proper expression) and I believe they would find the good effects of his excellent gifts, for they are distinguished; and that the seriousness and sweetness of his temper, and prudence of his conduct, would make them very happy. I must profess to you, that I find it extremely difficult to direct vacant churches, in the moderately Calvinistical way (as most that apply to me are) to suitable ministers. And I have hardly ever known the time when it was more difficult. I have no pupil to send out till Midsummer, and then hope, if God spare our lives, to furnish the churches with several excellent persons. The most probable means I can think of to direct you which way to look, in subordination to that upward prospect which I know you, dear Sir, have your eyes ever

ever upon, is to mention two or three pious, sensible, and, in the main, popular men, whom narrow circumstances force from their present situation, and to leave you to correspond with any of them as you may think fit for either of the places in question. The first of these I think you know, Mr. Wilkinson, now at Deal, if a wife and three chirdren, with little but a place to depend upon, be no objection. He is an admirable preacher, and a most lovely man. My neighbour, Mr. Gainsborough, of Newport-Pagnel, will leave his people; he is a worthy man, but low-spirited, and seems to have some objections against Suffolk; but whether equally against all parts of it, I know not. Mr. Affleck, whom I formerly mentioned, is very much esteemed in Holland, where he is now supplying, during good Mr. Longueville's absence; and he is certainly both in prayer and preaching, in my judgment, uncommonly excellent; and his temper and character remarkably good. But, as I formerly told you, he is a Scotchman; though really in his pronunciation much mended. He is a Calvinist, but of great moderation, exemplary humility, zeal, and activity for the glory of Christ and salvation of souls. This is all the information I can give you that I think material, and I leave you to advise our friends at Woodbridge and Wrentham as you judge most convenient.

Let me now conclude with our united and most affectionate services to yourself and lady, not forgetting my other friends at Norwich and in your former neighbourhood. I must not by any means, omit to beg your prayers for Mrs. Doddridge, who expects to be confined in a short time. You know what a good wife is, and she is one of the best, and rises in value every year. I am, you affectionate friend and brother.

P. S. Fain would I, if possible, end my Family Expositor; with the third volume of which I rejoice, if you and my other friends are pleased. Truly, I spared no pains to make it worthy their acceptance. I continue daily going on with the remaining books of the New Testament, and am now in Jude; so that I hope to end the first copy, from which, if I should be removed, the work might be printed, by the end of December: but I have carried the notes no farther than Ephesians, being intent on the paraphrase, version, and improvements, as what, to general edification, seemed most material.

LETTER CVII.

Nathaniel Neal, Esq. to Dr. Doddridge.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Dear Sir, Sept. 1, 1751.

I FEEL a struggle in my breast whilst I deliberate, whether, considering the feeble state of your health, I should break or keep silence; but such is the officiousness of friendship, that anxious (though impotent) to afford relief, inquiry must be made after an afflicted friend, though at some hazard of disturbing his slumbers.

How affected we all were, (in which number I include Mr. Barker and his lady, for in our love and in our distress for you, we are all one) I say how affected we were with those various events which befell you in your progress to and on your arrival at Bristol, I choose not to mention; yet I trust in God, it will be seen in the issue, that it was the kind hand of his Providence that conducted you thither, as to the waters of life; for though to you it were a matter of choice not to revive at all, till you obtain a part in the better resurrection; yet in compassion to us, in compassion to this bankrupt-world, it is my daily prayer, (Oh, forgive me this wrong!) that you may not yet increase the number, and enhance the triumphs, of the blessed.

I persuade myself, my dear friend, that you have left all your cares as well as all your business at Northampton, and that you will be inaccessible to every uninvited guest. Ceremony is the bane of solitude; and even the draught of pious or cheerful converse should be taken in measure, and under a guard, where the appetite of the soul is so eager, and every kind of exercise has been found so fatal.

I presume you know before this time, that the examination of your pupils on Monday last (as far as was censistent with your absence) proceeded with signal honour to Mr. Clark, and satisfaction to the trustees; of which Mr. Price has, by letter since his return, given me a most obliging and circumstantial account, knowing how much I interested myself in the event.—But whence have you your remittances to Bristol? The settling accounts,

counts, or sending in bills, is a trouble of which you should now be eased: I desire, therefore, that either you or Mrs. Doddridge will draw on me for any sum you want, without any other ceremony than advising me of it by a line; or if you can devise any other method to prove my friendship, it will be a kind relief to one who is oppressed under a sense of his inability, in this season of difficulty, to do you service.

And now, my dear friend, though I am no advocate for the sleeping of the soul, yet methinks I could wish, that you, who are all soul, (having so nearly worn out the frail vehicle in its service) could for a while suspend the thinking powers, that the body might have time to revive. We all submit to deny ourselves the expectation of hearing from you, that the time a letter would cost you may be devoted to rest. A line from any hand will satisfy us, if you are better; and if otherwise, a word will be more than we can well support. Compliments are vain, whilst you possess our hearts; and as for Mrs. Doddridge, as ministering to you, she shares the office, may she partake of the refreshments, of angels!

Adieu. Be God ever with you; which is the most comprehensive good that can he wished you by your most affectionate friend and humble servant.

LETTER CVIII.

From the same to the same.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Dear Sir, Sept. 11, 1751.

MR. Johnston came into Mr. Barker's lodgings with your letter, whilst I was there to-day with my family at dinner, and after the contents of it had been read and considered, I was desired to put our united opinion (which you know where a consultation has been held is the province of the youngest) into writing.

We all agree, that the single point which must determine the expedience of your making trial of a warmer climate, is the probabilty of its restoring your health, of which your physicians are the only competent judges. The accounts you have had of its success in like cases, is undoubtedly a strong testimony in favour of their judgment; and Mr. Barker mentioned it to me last Sunday, as what he apprehended the most probable means of your speedy and perfect recovery.

The objections arising therefore in your mind, from your connections with your academy, or church, or family, must not be suffered either to deter or perplex you. Reduce them to the principal, and then communicate them to us. If we cannot supply your place for six months, how shall we supply it, if you go to the place from whence there is no return? Be assured, my dear friend, we are so far from being dismayed, that we spring forward in the hope of being instrumental in keeping alive the many precious interests that lie near your heart, till you return and cherish them again, under your own tender wing.

Though I write in great haste, I cannot close without suggesting, that you should not choose the place to which you remove, for any reasons but merely those of health; that Mrs. Doddridge must have a faithful and tender friend with her, who has some strength and firmness of mind; and cannot you leave some minister, in conjunction which Mr. Clark, to superintend your academy and family?

May God Almighty (the alone all-sufficient friend and counsellor) inspire you and your dear lady with wisdom and magnanimity equal to every emergence! and be assured, whilst we have any bowels or breath remaining, our prayers and our affections will follow you, though you should remove to the ends of the earth. I am, my dear and worthy friend, most faithfully and entirely yours.

LETTER CIX.

From the same to the same.

Million-Bank,
Dear Sir, Sept. 21, 1751.

I RECEIVED your favour of the 16th instant. I pray God, the measure advised by so great a body of the college may be as successful as, with such a sanction, it was apparently irresistible.

Your provision for the academy, I can already assure you, is very satisfactory to Dr. Jennings, Mr. Price, and myself, and I have no doubt will be so to Dr. Guyse, to whom I shall communicate it the first opportunity. We had a meeting on the day (and just before) your last letter

letter arrived: at which the trustees unanimously, and with the warmest affection, agreed to desire your acceptance of thirty guineas, as a present towards your expences at Lisbon, and in your voyage thither. I have likewise received ten guineas more as a present to you from a private hand, though I am not allowed to mention the person.

And now, my dear friend, I chearfully accept the office of your banker and steward; and though I undertake for nothing more, yet from the generous ardor many of your friends express towards you, do not despair of receiving your stock entire, if it be the will of God, that you return to us again. You go with a full gale of prayer, and I trust we shall stand ready, on the shore, to receive you back with shouts of praise. But it becomes us also to be prepared for a more awful event; and I think it needful to desire you to tell Mrs. Doddridge (though God forbid, the hand should wound, that fain would heal her) that we, as it were, forget you, I had almost said forget ourselves, whilst we think of her; that she is heir to every heart that is yet yours; above all, that she is sure of an interest in that God, whose arms are everlasting, whose presence is universal, and whose compassions never fail. He is the creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching his understanding. Oh, Sir, the time is hastening, when these ways of his, which are now so unsearchable, shall appear to have been marked out by the counsels of infinite wisdom; and we, who may be left longest to lean upon, and support one another by turns, in this weary land, shall fix our feet on those everlasting hills, where our joys shall never leave, nor our vigour ever fail us! There, my dear friend, may we be one, in that union which cannot be dissolved! In this blessed hope I am affectionately yours.

I cannot enumerate the solicitous inquiries that are daily made concerning you. Pray be sure, that Mrs. Doddridge have some suitable companion with her, that may be a solace and support to her in any event. I take it for granted some person knows where your will is deposited.

LETTER CX.

Henry Baker, Esq. to Dr. Doddridge.

Catherine-street,
Dear Sir, Feb. 13, 1749-50.

THE shortest apologies are best, and as you are, I hope, convinced of my sincere respect, I shall not waste the little time I can command in writing you the reasons of my long silence, but come directly to the purpose of this letter, which is to inquire, if you, at Northampton, felt any thing of the earthquake that surprised us last week in London, and to send you some account thereof.

On Thursday last, the 8th of this instant, as I was walking along Chancery-lane towards Holborn, at about forty minutes past twelve at noon, people came out of several houses to their doors, in great surprise, complaining of the shaking of their houses, and imputing it to the fall of some building, large timber, or other heavy body, which they imagined to have fallen at some little distance from them, and which they came out to inquire after.

When I was got into Holborn, I found the people there under the same consternation, and expressing themselves nearly in the same manner. Going on to Gray's Inn, many people were got together in the great square, talking about the shock they had felt, and, in particular, a lamplighter was giving an account, that being on his ladder pouring oil into a lamp, he was in great danger of falling by the unexpected shaking of the ladder. I then went to a friend's chambers, under Gray's Inn library, where the shock had been so great that they thought a clock would have fallen down; and fancied, at the time, that some large box or vast heap of books had been tumbled down over head. The people in all the streets, as I returned home, were talking of this strange motion, which now every body understood to be an earthquake, and many women complained it had made them sick, in which their fright might probably be equally concerned. At coming home, I found my own family had been no less surprised, and Mrs. Baker had sent to the neighbours to inquire if any thing had fallen down in their houses to occasion the shaking of mine which she described as very violent. She sat at the

the time in the dining-room, on the first floor next the street, and her supposition at the instant was, that one of the servants had fallen all along with great violence in a back room of the next story; had tried to get up, stumbled, and was fallen down again, thereby shaking the house and making a great noise. My son was then at the Tower, where the same shock was felt, and every body was startled with the immediate apprehension of some explosion of gunpowder, of which there are great quantities. A gentleman who was sitting at a table writing, at his house in the Mint in the Tower, was tossed out of his chair against the table with violence.

I inquired of many people in different streets, that by comparing their accounts I might form a better judgement, and I found them agree universally in the first supposition of the fall of some ponderous body, most said with a great noise, but some few were not sensible of that; I endeavoured likewise to learn its course, and by comparing the reports of people in different situations, it seems to have lain east and west, and to have passed from the west eastward.

I felt nothing of it myself as I walked in the street, nor do I find that many who were walking did; but that I impute to the noise and shaking of the carts and coaches.

Our worthy president of the Royal Society had some gentlemen with him at his house in Queen-Square, who were all surprised with something falling, as they imagined, with a great noise, and at the instant, the house seemed to heave up, then to sink down again, and totter sideways till it seemed to settle. Two coaches waiting at his door, the coachmen found themselves lifted up, and almost tumbled from their seats; other people took notice also of this rising and sinking. In Westminster-Hall both the judges and pleaders thought the hall would tumble on their heads; and the judges, whose seats are contiguous to the wall, felt it shake from its foundation. Doors were opened, pewter and other things thrown down in many houses, and some chimnies fell.

This day fortnight, a most extraordinary light appeared in the sky towards the south-east, between six and seven in the evening, and surprised the whole town, with the apprehension of a great fire; for the sky appeared of a fiery redness at the beginning, and then seemed to form a line of dark red fire of about fifteen degrees in width, which continued for some time, then diffused, and left a remarkable lightness in the sky during the whole night after.

One cannot, I think, let such uncommon phænomena pass unheeded: if these terrors of the Almighty will not excite reflection, surely nothing will. I hope, therefore, this short account will prove acceptable, and that you will excuse my great omissions towards you for a long time past, which I assure you have often given me some uneasiness.

I have several times been thinking of the two instances you mentioned, when I saw you last, of the effect some wounds have on the jaws and nervous system, by locking up the mouth as it were, and thereby bringing on death. As such cases are very little known, and we have none of them among the many papers sent to the Royal Society, you would oblige us much by an account thereof, especially of the last case; which happening in your own house, you can more particularly speak to; and if you shall not judge it proper to mention the gentleman's name, if you call him only a young gentleman, it will be (from you) sufficiently satisfactory.

I have just received a letter from Dr. Miles, informing me that the earthquake was felt at Tooting, though not by his family; it was felt pretty strongly at Greenwich, and at Darking in Kent, at Hampstead, at Kilburn, at Richford, and Kingston in Middlesex, and also at Enfield. Other places I am as yet uncertain of. A line from you will always give me unspeakable satisfaction, and I hope you will do me the justice to believe, that I am, with the most cordial wishes for the prosperiety of you and yours, in which Mrs. Baker and my sons join most heartily, dear Sir, your most faithful and most affectionate humble servant.

LETTER CXI.

Dr. Cotton to Dr. Doddridge.*

St. Alban's,
Dear and Hon. Sir, April 29, 1749.

I AM very much obliged to you for your late tender instances of condescension and friendship. The comfort and advice, which you most kindly administer, are extremely acceptable; and I heartily pray God to give them their due weight. For my own part, I am, and have long been, abundantly persuaded, that no system, but that of christianity, is able to sustain the soul amidst all the difficulties and distresses of life. The consolations of philosophy only, are specious trifles at best, all cold and impotent applications indeed to the bleeding heart! But the religion of Jesus, like its gracious and benevolent author, is an inexhaustible source of comfort in this world, and gives us the hopes of everlasting enjoyment in the next.

I presume humbly to hope, that the Supreme Being will support me under my affliction! and I most earnestly intreat, that he will sanctify my sorrows to every gracious and good purpose.

What the mind feels upon such a painful divorce, none can adequately know, but they who have had the bitter experience of this sad solemnity. However, delicate and worthy minds will readily paint out to themselves something unutterably soft and moving upon the separation of two hearts, whose only division was their lodgment in two breasts.

I am extremely indebted to your lady, for her kind sympathy with me in my sorrows, and the only return that I can make either to herself or her consort, is my hearty prayer, that the dissolution of their happy union may be at a very distant period. I am, with the highest esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

* An eminent physician at St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire, and author of the Visions, the Fireside, and some other very pleasing poems.

LETTER CXII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Joseph Taylor, Esq.*

Dublin, January, 3, 1738-9.

IT is an age, my dear Taylor, since I heard from you: I hope nothing worse than perverse business hath obtruded itself so entirely on your mind, as to drive me from it. If you are happy, I shall be very easy, whatever is the motive; because I am sure nothing can have made your old friend less dear to you than formerly. Though this winter has its influence on my crazy constitution, yet the noble cordial, *ipecacuanha*, frequently taken, undoes all the mischiefs of the weather, and makes me enjoy ease and cheerfulness, in spite of the season. We have here certainly the most fine winters and dreary summers, that can be imagined. Scarcely a day passeth but the greatest part of it is mild and bright, as April; and if a few happy showers refresh the ground, a gentle wind fans it away presently, and all is serene and delightful, during the dark days of other climates. But the summer shall not make my paper dismal, and therefore I will not describe it.

My house will be quite finished in about six weeks. It hath cost me a shameful deal of money; but I am not afraid, that my wife and children that I am to get in my dotage, should upbraid me. The whole is handsome, but nothing magnificent, but the garret in which I have lodged my books; and if I have been extravagant in doing them honour, I hope it will be pardoned; because I owe it in some measure to them, that I was enabled to be at the expence; and gratitude, I hope, can excuse the fault it occasions. Some think it too splendid for me in my station, and will contend it would have been wiser and more decent to have locked my money in a chest, or sent to France for social claret, than to squander it among Irish workmen, to enable them to procure beef and potatoes for their hungry families; and build an habitation too elegant for an Irish prelate. *Laudatur ab his, culpatur ab illis*, is the condition of every action that is done by those who are placed in a way of life

* Lord Bishop of Derry in Ireland.

that

that is exposed either to flattery or envy, and I am resigned under the common misfortune. Candour surely is all that can be expected, or should be desired, in life. I have the consolation to hear, that every one applauds my taste and my contrivance. I served my old house as Medusa did the old man, cut it in pieces, cooked it up with my art, and made it young again. In my library, for they have dignified it with that considerable name, I can say, *hic ver perpetuum ac alienis mensibus æstas*. It is 64 feet long; at the east is a bow window that takes in a most variegated and extended prospect. In a bright evening the mountains in Wales are seen by an unassisted eye; on the north the highest hills in Ireland, more than a degree distant from us, are beheld distinctly. The ocean with its islands, a large river, an harbour rich with ships, a city, an university, some villages, woods and meadows, and nearer hills of less and more cultivated height, are mingled together in the most amusing contrast.—Three windows on the south overlook a range of nursery gardens, and meadows ever verdant, interspersed with houses, neat, white, and cheerful, where industry and contentment seem married, and become the parents of many children. Round the place, an half circle of lofty hills, fashioned in the most delightful shapes, like Virgil's Fame, tread on the earth, and lift their heads above the clouds. Could I have the joy to see you in Dublin, you should own this description not so delightful as the reality. The room is 20 feet wide, and only 16 high. It is caved almost a third. An entablature of the Ionic order over round the whole room, unbroken. The frize is enriched with the Vitruvian scrole, adorned with its proper foliages. The ceiling is divided into three compartments: the division made agreeable by the plain Vitruvian fret, and the other work on the ceiling rather elegant than heavy and expansive. The entablature is supported with two and thirty three-quarters columns of the Ionic order, which stand on a pedestal that goes round the room, exactly of the height of the window from the floor. In this pedestal are my largest books, between the pillars; my lesser books are ranged uniformly round the room. In the west side is the chimney, formed in the best taste, of an Irish marble of an excellent polish; over which I will place a bust of the Chancellor, and on one side the Bishop of Durham; and if I can get a noble copy of Mr. Edward Talbot, by Vanderback, he shall adorn the other; and then the three persons dearest to my heart, to whom I have had the highest (I had almost said the only) obligations in life, will appear there to consecrate my expence, and do them honour. In the east end is my bow window, exactly half a circle, whose diameter is 10 feet. The glass is bent to answer the curvature of the building.

I have explained to you the room at large, that you may call me an extravagant fellow, or justify me to those who call me so. If I live and do well, I shall spend my days here in an elegant and cheerful retirement, in old age and the vale of life: if I do not, those who come after me need not grudge what I have bestowed; because it will sell to some one who likes its beauty, perhaps for as much as it cost, at least for as much as any, who complain of it, could deserve. If I could see my old English friend in it, it would give me infinitely more joy than all the dead fine landscapes I behold. My chief pleasure here is in conversation with chosen friends, who bring learning into chit-chat, and are not ashamed of being cheerful, while they are talking on the most sublime subjects. We endeavour to make the Muses, and all their polite arts, serve as handmaids to adorn real wisdom; and introduce into our hearts every truth, that can make us love the Creator, or make us worthy his love; that can make us enjoy life ourselves, or contribute to make others do so, with thankfulness as well as contentment and resignation. Gentlemen and ladies, old and young, rich and poor, soldiers and bishops, meet together often in my library, and find something in the conversation pleasing, and not unuseful to any of them. They all contribute their share of the entertainment, and are most exquisitely pleased when they please.

You see, my friend, my banishment is not grievous, though it was severe. When they removed me from business and an active life, among my friends in my own country, they gave me *otium cum dignitate* instead of it. Perhaps the sweetest condition of man is to know what was best for him.

I have filled this letter in talking on the worst subject in the world, myself

and my own concerns; but it is a fault that a friend will pardon, though it would be nauseous to others; and the more pardonable, because in this corner of the world, no news or adventures can happen fit to fill a letter.

I hope the very great wind which we had on Sunday, the 13th of this month, did not reach you. Had it lasted long, it would have done incredible mischief; but as it was, it run through the whole kingdom, killed some, and ruined many.

My most affectionate service to your lady and mother. I am, my dear Taylor, yours most sincerely, &c.

LETTER CXIII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to the Reverend Dean Clarke.

Barrington,
My dear Friend, Sept. 9, 1740.

If I was not the most inactive mortal living, I would quickly come to you at Winchester, to assure you what esteem and affection for you have ever been in my heart; but, I believe, I must defer my visit to you till I can pay it in that city (Exeter) where I was educated, and which still continues the delight of my imagination. Though I think it by far the finest climate, and most agreeable place of residence in England, yet it never appeared in so fair a light to me, as it will, when I see you presiding in its cathedral. I have still some few valuable acquaintance left in that country, who will think themselves happy in your friendship, and rejoice to perform to you all the self-rewarding duties of good neighbourhood; and I am confident they will think themselves more obliged to me for making them known to you, than for all the other civilities it has ever been in my power to shew them.

Your house there, as well as I remember, is large, but gloomily situated under the shadow of the church; crowded with houses in such a manner, as not to suffer you to have any gardens of value; but the variety of public walks round the town, and the beauty of the landscapes, and the warmth of the air, will make you ample amends for every inconvenience at home, if any such there be. But I am just informed that you have not yet taken possession of it. Whence this delay? I hope it is not from indifference. If you go down next spring, I will offer you my company, if that can make the journey more agreeable.—— You will find there every thing that your hospitable heart can desire, in greater plenty, greater elegance, and at less expence, than in any city in England, and, I may almost say, Ireland, if I am not deceived by my memory and my friends. Forgive my indulging myself in the praises of my first love, to one who is to enjoy her beauties, whilst I am banished to Thulè, far from sunshine, and the conversation of those friends, whose company would make even Thulè pleasant, and sunshine forgotten. If you have any taste for gardening, and cultivating and amassing any kind of vegetable riches, the trees there shoot with a more luxuriant verdure; the flowers glow with warmer colours: and the fruits ripen to a richer flavour, than in any part of this island; and the fig and the grape scarce desire better skies.

I am glad you are pleased with Colonel Folliot; he is a sensible, friendly, upright man; indefatigable in obliging those for whom he has conceived an esteem, and generous to the full extent of his fortune. He has a taste for the beauties of nature, and indulges himself in the enjoyment of every rational amusement of that kind, which he can purchase with discretion. You and he have many things in common, in the turn of your indefatigable charity, to relieve the distresses of mankind; and our hospital for invalids, by his dexterity and diligence, was raised from being *vox et prætera nihil*, into a comfort for many hundreds of unhappy wretches; and is now an honour to our kingdom: and whilst it continues so, will preserve to posterity an account of the fortitude, and virtue, and wisdom of Folliot.

I intend to continue here till the meeting of the parliament, and then to remove to Mr. John Talbot's, in Red Lion-square. You know me well enough, to be sure that the chief call I have into England is to enjoy the company of those friends, to whose family and affection I owe all the good fortune of my life. Inclination and gratitude united in determining me to undertake my present journey. I design to continue the winter and spring in London, and in the beginning of the summer see my other friends, and then return to Ireland for ever. I grow

too

too old, and too inactive, to propose any future expeditions. I have recovered my health and spirits, but not my strength. I am infinitely better than ever I expected, or could even hope for, without presumption; but yet the effects of a distemper, as well as the infirmities of old age, will disable me from any prospect of being hereafter fit for any thing, but talking in an elbow-chair.

I own to you, my friend, my situation in Ireland is as agreeable to me as any possibly could be, remote from the early friendships of my life. I have been served as Plato in his commonwealth would have Homer treated; "First," says the philosopher, "do him honours, reward "his merit, and then—banish him." At Dublin I enjoy the most delightful habitation, the finest landscape, and the mildest climate, that can be described or desired. I have a house there rather too elegant and magnificent: in the north an easy diocese, and a large revenue. I have but thirty-five beneficed clergymen under my care, and they are all regular, decent, and neighbourly: each hath considerable and commendable general learning; but not one is eminent for any particular branch of knowledge. And I have rather more curates, who are allowed by their rectors such a stipend as hath, alas! tempted most of them to marry; and it is not uncommon to have curates that are fathers of eight or ten children, without any thing but an allowance of forty pounds a year to support them.

The only discipline that I have as yet exerted, hath been to discard three out of my diocese, who, though refused certificates by me and my clergy, have obtained good livings in America, and found room for repentance. If their former misfortunes have been a warning to them, I rejoice at their success; but if they are once more negligent of their conduct, there is no farther beneficial pardon for their follies in this life, though they should sincerely seek it with tears.

My Dean, your kinsman, is much beloved at Derry, and is highly delighted with the preferment. That place was the first object of his fondness, and agrees with his constitution; his wife was born in it, and is related to great numbers near it. He is very generous, and a great economist; lives splendidly, yet buys estates; and equally takes care of his reputation and his family. The income is above 1300l. *per ann.* but he hath seven curates, to whom he is generous. It is a preferment which will increase daily, and the outgoings continue the same. It is now a clear 1000l. and will next year be probably better. I have only room to assure you that I am yours most sincerely, &c.

LETTER CXIV.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam,

MY Lord has commanded me to write to you. He hath the most melancholy excuse for not doing it himself, that ever a poor father had. He hath lost his second son, the clergyman*, who was the delight and honour of his father, and beloved by all mankind. I have lost a friend, in whom I had placed all the comfort and happiness of my life. I never had a thought of pleasure, to which his company and conversation did not contribute the greatest and most amiable part. He gave a relish to all my expectations. Perhaps there may have been many superior to him in learning; some few his equals in abilities, who have had the same accuracy of judgment, the same discernment, the same clearness of thought; but what a divine world would this be, were there any numbers that had his sweetness of temper, his sincerity, his love for virtue! He loved nothing else! The whole ambition of his life was to make others happy: he valued his abilities only as they could contribute to that God-like end. His conversation had as much spirit and wit, joined with as much right sense and instruction, as ever, when single, made men desired for their company: yet he valued these in himself, not as they made him beloved and praised by all, but his own share of the satisfaction arose from the thought that he entertained others, not from any superiority over others on that account. My heart is full of affection for him. Nothing can be said equal to his merit; or can I express my grief for his loss. We lived together ten years in the most tender and endeared

* Edward Talbot, Archdeacon of Berks, to whose friendship Dr. Rundle owed his introduction to the family, and consequent promotion. He died 1720.

friendship. When in the same place, our souls were open to each other: in conversation, we thought aloud. When absent, our letters were the pictures of our souls, and every post we conversed. I had no pleasure but what his friendship gave me.

I beg pardon, Madam, for my talking so much of my own self and my sorrows, when I should be begging your assistance, by a kind letter, to comfort my poor Lord. So much, perhaps, you may learn from this letter, that I am unable to do it myself; and therefore it may induce you to hasten your charity. I put on a forced easiness and cheerfulness when in his company, and make my looks belie my heart; but when I retire, I am glad to indulge my grief. I loved him; I think all that knew me will say that I loved nothing else. But I must beg your excuse, Madam, that I should let my concern overflow, when I ought to be entertaining you; but I am sure you are sensible of the pleasure of friendship, and can forgive rudenesses which are caused by such a virtue. It is the only virtue that I can boast my heart was sincerely full of. Madam, your most obedient, most humble servant.

LETTER CXV.

Dr. Thomas Randle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, May, 1729.

I do not write to entertain you. Poor Dr. Clarke is dying*. This morning we thought him out of danger; but now he is going to his Newton. He is above our pity. It is selfishness to lament him; but a selfishness that a man cannot love virtue without feeling. My heart is big with concern and tenderness, and longing for the dear instruction of even his most careless conversation! With what ease and cheerfulness did he familiarize knowledge, and bring the highest subjects into the sprightliness of conversation! Religion pities the world, for its not deserving the blessing of his sweet authority, to stop the torrent of infidelity amongst the great. They knew his sense and integrity. They could not believe there was no truth in what he defended, obeyed, and for which he suffered. What punishment, good God! art thou preparing to inflict on a dissolute world! that thou callest out of it the servant who is best prepared to promote thy blest desire of making it wise and virtuous, and by them happy! but he is going to enjoy the reward of his goodness. If there is a God (*and that there is, all Nature cries aloud in all her works*) he must delight in such worth, such love for truth, such resignation, such active virtue; and that which he delights in, must be happy; happier than this world can make it, though he was happy here. Our present blessings are all that justice can require; but are not equal to the bounty of infinite goodness! What good man, that had it in his power to reward such worth, but would rejoice in doing it? and doth any mortal presume to think he loves virtue more than God doth? what we would, he can reward; and what he can, he wills. He who gave us being, when nothing but his own kindness prompted him, will be solicited more strongly to continue it on so much worth, and to one who so amiably resembled him. But why do my thoughts run on into such meditations? I know not how; recollecting such assurances, is the natural resource of a mind opprest by the loss of a friend he loved; it is our only——

* Dr. Clarke died the 17th of May, 1729. His illness began on the 11th, from which he had so far recovered, as to give hopes of his restoration, till the day preceding his dissolution.

I had almost forgot to say, that I left London on Monday; but my thoughts are too much engaged, to think of any thing but the poor Doctor. I know you will be equally concerned with us. You knew him as well: and your goodness loved equally his virtue. Madam, yours sincerely.

LETTER CXVI.

From the same to the same.

Madam, 1729.

Since you are so good as not to insist on my paying you the debt of honour (for such surely are promises) till I come to Durham; I will endeavour then to be honest, and return you thankfully both the principal and interest; though it is an odd sort of payment, which will doubly increase my debt to you by your receiving it. I ought to have thanked you

you sooner for your last; but hoping to get every post more time, I have squandered what I had, and am obliged now to write, not only in a hurry, but in company. You do not well to compare your manner of writing to the workings of the spider, though nothing can so fully express the native treasures and untaught art that adorn your mind. I remember the Egyptian writers in hieroglyphics thought it fit to represent the Creator, who produced all from himself, and was conscious of every thing which touched any part of this offspring of his power; and as much as I admire you, I will not allow you to apply to yourself what hath been consecrated before, to so peculiar a subject; though if any had a right, it would be one that makes it the amiable duty of life to resemble the great mind in a much more lively manner than can be expressed by that figured language. Mrs. Sayer begs your pardon for omitting to thank Mrs. Sandys for her lampreys, and assure her that nothing was ever better; but do not wonder that she forgot it; when she was writing, she was too full of you, to think even of your presents; and this, Lord Archbishop of Cambray says, is the true spirit of devotion when applied to an higher object; to be in that transport of admiration at his perfections, which will even obscure his very bounties, and make his infinite kindness unregarded, and unthought on; and it is no wonder if sincere friendship humbly imitates that noble natural working of the heart, which is only friendship sublimed and enlarged, and only differs from it as a rivulet doth from the ocean.

My Lord and Mrs. Talbot are extremely well, and preparing to remove into their sweet retirement; but sweet as it is, it will be no-ways agreeable, till you animate the groves and meadows with a music, which is more delightful than that of nightingales, your conversation.———Spadille calls, and I must obey; that pretended enemy, yet truest friend, to idleness! that tyrant to destroy the only joy of company, even whilst he boasts of his being sociable! I may rail, but he will triumph over me, and because I hate him, he punishes me, but the loss of time is worse than that of money; but here is none but a Parthian victory to be obtained over him, and I hope next Monday to conquer by flying from him. I carry down with me the son of the solicitor*; if my conversation can be of any service to him I shall rejoice; for I would not live any longer, than I could get opportunities to shew my gratitude to that family, to which I owe all the happiness and dignity of my life. He is perfectly sober and innocent, and I would animate those blank virtues with sentiments of honour, and a noble zeal and ardour for the brave virtues, from whence arises the splendour and usefulness of large fortunes, without which the enjoyment of them is only a gaudy idleness. Spadille, I come! I am unwillingly torn from you; but I will still interrupt his diversion, and suspend his eagerness, till I have assured you, that I shall receive no pleasure at Durham so great as hearing from you, and thanking you for your letters. I am your most sincere, &c.

LETTER CXVII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, 1729.

I could not suffer my servant to go to Miserden, without thanking you for the entertainment you gave us there, which had every thing in it that could make life delightful; and though your table was with the most elegant ease covered with the greatest variety, yet the low pleasures which the art of cookery can pretend to bestow, are not thought of when we reflect on the happiness we enjoyed in your retirement. Conversation, which Milton rightly calls the food of the soul, was the noble feast, and angels themselves would not think it below them to partake of, and enjoy an entertainment, which was composed of wisdom and virtue.

My friend hath left me, and though I am still with other friends, whom gratitude and inclination make me love, yet I know not how he hath so taken possession of my heart, that his presence is not only the highest pleasure to me itself, like the beholding of sunshine, but like that, necessary also to make me view and receive pleasure from all other the most beloved objects.

* William, late Earl Talbot.

My Lord continues well, but methinks his air hath not that serene complacence in it that we admired at Miserden; there was something then that shed a gladness over his countenance, and enlightened his features; his look differs from what it then appeared, as a landscape viewed in the shade doth from the same landscape beheld in the brightest day. He desires that you would be so good as to send him some of your rob of elder; a medicine of which he is extremely fond, and of which I have the meanest opinion: but if the juice itself hath no virtue, expectation may add some to it, and as many have found relief from an hearty good opinion, as from a natural efficacy; and if good is received, it is no matter whether it be from the drugs or our own fancy.

When I return to London, I hope to be able to furnish out a letter of diversion for you: this place affords no accounts but of the murders and assassinations of innocent hares and pheasants, which sport of death I have a perverse good nature in me, which, though reason justifies, is unable to be subdued to approve of. If I could explain to my understanding that great mystery of natural religion, the ordaining, that the life of some should be supported always by the death of others, I should believe it right, though unintelligible; for what goodness hath evidently appointed is good: and I would have reprimanded the reluctance of my heart for disliking what the Author of nature, the Father of mercies, hath chosen. But I think I see clearly the wisdom and benevolence of this scheme of things; my reason is convinced, but my aversion to misery is so indiscreetly strong, that it overpowers my judgment, and I am downright vicious, out of an excess of goodness. This prevents my joining in the amusements of the place, this and my laziness together; and though I am in a crowd of company, I spend my day in solitude. I am, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, July 16, 1730.

I HAVE presumed to send you a present of Mr. Thomson's Seasons; a volume, on which reason bestows as many beauties as imagination. It is a subject, that our first parents would have sung in Paradise, had they never been seduced, by the serene flattery of false knowledge, to forsake humility and innocence. But they would scarcely have excited, by what they sung, a purer praise of virtue or higher raptures of adoration, than will warm your heart, when you read the description of these rural scenes of the graces and benevolence of nature. Such writings give dignity to leisure, and exalt entertainment and amusements into devotion. If I praise the performance more than it deserves, consider it as an honest art of giving value to my present: for I would not willingly offer any thing to you, of which I had not an high esteem. But I confess, I am so fond of poetry, that every attempt to unite and marry it to virtue, is extremely agreeable to me: and I can, on such occasions, scarcely forbear composing their epithalamium. Hail sacred verse, thou eldest offspring of human ingenuity! before letters were invented, numbers and the music of regularly unequal syllables retained those histories in the memory of mankind, which then there was no outward learning to preserve. By thee those sons of reason, arts, philosophy, and laws, were nourished and educated; men were civilized and society made delightful. The chronicles of the Bards and the instruction of the Druids on every duty and ornament of life were adorned by harmony, and by pleasing imagination were remembered with ease.

How much better known is the hunting on Chiviot, than the glorious deeds of our ancestors at Cressy and Agincourt? In verse oracles were delivered to mankind. The sublimity, and beauty, and difficulty of that measured language were thought a proof that it came from more than mortal beings. Men have not been unwilling to acknowledge every astonishing accomplishment to be owing to the assistance of some divinity; that whilst they praised those noble abilities they might comfort their own vanity, and not think any of their brethren naturally so very much their superiors; for an oak was still an oak, though Jove returned his answers from it.

In verse, men offered up their gratitude in temples, though sanctity of manners and an harmony of life were a more acceptable

acceptable sacrifice than the most exalted hymn; yet he who hath poured beauty, and order, and regularity over all his works, reason cries aloud, surely delights in beauty. What he delights in is amiable, and it is our honour and privilege to delight in it also: to admonish and assist us in doing this, they argued, "let us consecrate every thing "truly great, proportioned, and graceful, in human arts and inventions to "his service."

Poetry and music were thus introduced into public worship. The care of a decency in ranging and giving harmony to the order of their words taught an higher care of the infinitely more sublime, more pleasing decency of a right conduct in life; and a right harmony amidst the affections of the heart. Devotion was thus deemed slovenly and careless and uninstructive, when separated from verse: like coming into the presence of a king undressed, it was a negligence, which was interpreted disrespect. The desire of communicating knowledge to each other, and expressing the gratitude and thankfulness with which they glowed towards heaven, gave birth to the sweet art of adding music to words. They joined uniformity and variety (in which every sort of beauty consists) to the measures, with which their sentences moved from the tongue. But a love of money and trade at last invented letters, embodied thought, and made sounds become visible and immortal.

There was then no longer a necessity to embalm stories in verse, to induce men to remember them; because they could now be engraved on marble, or, what is more durable, on paper, and last to future ages in spite of the carelessness of the present. Men having now their hearts turned to the adoration of the new goddess, daughter of trade, unnecessary riches, neglected the pomp and dignity of that worship, which was their joy, whilst innocence and contentment with nature's bounty governed them. Verse, therefore, and the laboured simplicity of its charms, were no longer cultivated for the temple, but the tawdry beauties which trade invented, banished her thence to seat themselves in her place. Gold and embroidery, sculpture and painting, wantoned with mimic finery, to captivate the heart, and recommended and pleaded for the service of that idol Superstition, because she in return pleaded for their high use and religious value.

When poetry was degraded from being the priestess of nature, she soon was seduced to lend her office to meaner purposes, and became the servant of every passion in the temper; and vanity and love chiefly retained her in their service, and flattery and lasciviousness were soon made too agreeable by her assistance. How worthy therefore is the design of chiding her meanness, to recall her to her first high office of adorning piety, and raising an ambition after virtue! This is the intention of Mr. Thomson's work, which I send you. I am willing to be blind to every imperfection, where so worthy a wish guided the pen. But what are the imperfections! a rough or hard word, now and then indulged to lift his numbers above prose, and make the paltry gingle of rhime unnecessary; the repetition of the same phrase, every where highly proper perhaps; but the warmth of writing concealed from him the remembrance, that the reader is, though the writer is not, cool enough to demand variety; a hint not worked up to the height which our unexperienced imagination thinks it might be carried; but if we had tried ourselves, we should wonder at the dignity to which words have raised it. These and such mighty imperfections offend those who are untouched enough to be so minutely judicious. But the sentiments of liberty, of virtue, of generous manly piety, hurry away my approbation, and I have not leisure enough to be sagacious.

The most amusing paintings of poetry, that swiftly transport me from scene to scene of nature, ever charming, ever wonderful, so fill my heart with rapture, that I forget the poet and myself, and am only attentive on him and his works, whose goodness ordained the present only useful proportion of these changes, which are in all their majesty of wisdom placed before my reason to demand its gratitude. Out of the abundance of the heart the pen as well as the tongue speaketh, and my love of poetry hath made me forget, to what an indecent length of praise I have suffered it to ramble, and take up that paper, which should be allotted to more epistolary subjects.

I yesterday was at Asted; my Lord is better,

better, and intends to see you this summer. But Dr. Sayer flatters me, that he will soon give me an opportunity of performing my promise, and visit you at Miserden. We have no news, and scarcely know what news to desire; war people expect, they blame our ministers for deferring it so long; but whenever it is begun, they will, with higher clamour, blame them for not preventing it. Dr. Clarke's Sermons is the only book of note or value, which hath been lately published; those you will read; and then you will despise all the praises and all the censures of them; the first cannot increase, or the other lessen, the opinion your own judgment will give you of those performances. If any thing which can entertain you shall be published before I leave London, I will bring it with me, rejoicing in the treasures of other people's wit to divert you, who can pretend to none of my own; but whether I can be so fortunate or no, I doubt not of being welcome to you, who value nothing in your friends so much as their sincerity and good-nature, the first of which, in my professions of a value for you, none shall exceed, and I shall learn the other from your example. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXIX.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, 1730.

WHAT can I write to Mrs. Sandys on this sad sad occasion? Look into your own heart, and that will tell you what I feel, better than any words I can use to describe my sorrow. I have lost, I have lost my patron, friend, father! * To him I owe all the happiness I have ever enjoyed in life; all the comfort (if life hath any future comfort for me!) that I am still to receive, flows from his bounty to me! I saw him in misery, who never before was beheld by any that depended on him, but with gratitude and pleasure; to look on him, who loved us all, was a joy that made us relish the good fortune with which he had blest us. What can I do to shew my sense of gratitude to him? the labour of my life, the ambition of my life, shall be to enjoy the satisfaction of acting with a regard and love to his dear dear memory. He hath left Mrs. Talbot, though in no great, yet in no distressed condition. She hath 330l. a year, paid to her free from deductions; and by the generosity of Mr. Talbot, no inconsiderable sum to relieve her present wants, and reward those who shall shew her respect, and oblige her if she pleases to preserve it. Mr. Talbot's behaviour on this occasion hath been such as becomes the best man and best son that ever lived. He hath shewn a generosity, and tenderness, and regard to his poor dear beloved father, which will make him not only, as he ever was, the admiration, but the love, of all who know and love virtue. Poor Mrs. Sayer! you know the sensibility of her temper, and how it must have been wounded by this dreadful unexpected calamity! I want to be with you to pour out my heart on this distress; you would ask a thousand questions, and I say a thousand things, that conversation gave rise to, that one can neither think on when writing, nor would be proper to be written. When I am more at ease, I will write more to you on this dreadful subject. Grief is never talkative at first, but after the sorrow is subsided a little, there is melancholy pleasure in talking on the dear occasion of it, and by frequent renewing it, to familiarize it to the thought, and make it not only more easily borne, but have a sort of honest pride in being able to bear it. I know not how human nature often enjoys grief at last, and turns the poison itself into a kind of cordial.

My poor dear friend is under the deepest affliction; he loved my Lord, my Lord loved him. Though he made his will before the Doctor was married, my Lord made him his executor, with Mr. Talbot; though a troublesome, yet a pleasing office, as it is a pleasure to be esteemed and known to be so by such a man, especially to him, whose chief enjoyment in life is the pleasure of labouring to serve those he loves. Your, &c.

LETTER CXX.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Oct. 24, 1730.

THE condition of our grief has no variety, and therefore affords nothing for me to write different from my former; time, which stifles the first tumult of affection,

* Bishop Talbot, who died Oct. 12, 1730.

affection, gives leisure for thought to look around; but, alas! the more seriously we think, the more strongly we feel the calamity of his loss; and the sorrow which at first was only passion, is now reason. It is reason indeed, but selfish; and that concern, which arises from considering it as a misfortune and distress to one's self, though most natural to feel, it is unbecoming to acknowledge. That tender lamentation, which flows from gratitude and love of benevolence, which forgets that kindness to itself was the foundation of it, is that alone which virtue will permit us to indulge; because it cherishes in the heart the same amiable graces we melancholily commend. If these alone deserve our tears and fondness in him, these alone can excite the same sentiments of esteem towards ourselves; and what man is so mean, as not to desire to be beloved? But even this generous and improving grief is to be watched over and restrained, lest it soften us too much, disables us from performing the duties of life, and destroys that meek and cheerful resignation to the nature of things, that Providence hath ordained; which alone can make us pass through this life with comfort. That gratitude of sorrow towards others is bad indeed, which makes us repine, discontented and ungrateful, to him our Supreme Benefactor. When one is calm and alone, such reflections throw the mind into a melancholy composure, and one resolves to submit to those accidents which the condition of humanity requires us to feel and submit to. But every new friend we meet, every new occasion, silences these whispers of religious philosophy, and the heart prevails over the understanding; grief is again awakened, and one almost thinks it right to act against reason, and place a kind of sublime virtue in being self-condemned. Among the many calamities which attend his death, there is one, which, though it may appear trifling to vulgar minds, you will think is no small misfortune;—he was the centre, which drew and united together many of us into a sweet society of friends, where we met to enjoy the pleasures of conversation, with freedom, and that mutual goodwill and confidence, which alone make friendship sincere; without which, it is only well-bred hypocrisy, or like echo, a mere sound, without a substance; before him, we dared open the sentiments of our cautious hearts, and the observations or suspicions of our inquiries; and though we were of opinions different from those he embraced, he had the greatness of mind not to dislike those he thought mistaken; and from this variety of opinions he saw among those whose learning and sincerity he valued, he obtained that wisdom of charity with which so few are ever enlightened, that our duty is to be of one heart here, and it will be time enough to be of one mind hereafter. To repair this loss as much as we can, I resolve, when in London, to live with my friend, whose friendship now is the chief happiness I propose in life; but to confess sincerely, I have a scrupulous uneasiness at the figure I must make to the world, in living long in town from my preferment, when I have no call, but my own pleasure, to make me do so.

Whilst my Lord lived, the duty of attending the best benefactor, justified my absence to the world and myself; but now, though I have no cure of souls * to demand constant attendance, yet, methinks, people will believe it ill bestowed preferment on one, who seems to have no business in life, but in the dignity of polite idleness to gratify himself. The gratification of myself, indeed, will arise from what is ever amiable, ever praiseworthy, the friendship of a man of the best sense and virtue; but this cannot be seen by all, who observe my having nothing here to do; and though it is the hardest, yet it may be a necessary self-denial to refuse an indulgence of those most reasonable satisfactions, rather than injure a reputation; when the power of doing good in life, and the honour of religion, may in some measure depend on it. This will certainly oblige me to spend no small part of the summer in the north, which now I fear will ever be made more bleak and disagreeable to me, than the niggardliness of our sunshine hath yet made it, by the absence of those I love. How vain are the schemes we propose! How did we flatter ourselves with meeting there together next summer, and enjoying the best pleasure of life, the con-

* Dr. Randle's preferments were, a prebend of Durham, and the Archdeaconry of Wilts, prior to his advancement to the mitre.

versation

versation of friends, whose very trifling and unbendings are distinguished by good sense, as well as their collected behaviour. I shall never see you there more! My unkind, though generous fortune, will oblige me to retire from those I love, in that season of the year, when only they will be able to have what they and I most value, the leisure of being happy in your company.

Mrs. Talbot is ill, but bears her misfortune as well as could be expected or wished. I know not how, age bears affliction better than youth; passions are not in them so strong, and, therefore their less strength is sufficient to support them; passion is one kind of fever, and fevers always are most dangerous in young and healthy constitutions; the mind, as well as the body, grows callous by use, and as age hath been more exposed to afflictions, so it is hardened to them, by having often endured them.

She designs to live with her nephew Young, and hath taken a less, but handsomer house, than that my Lord lived in, near Grosvenor square. Where we shall be thrown, is not yet determined; but wherever I am, the whole felicity I can promise myself, must arise from loving and being beloved by those whose virtue and right hearts, and good sense, make conversation an imitation of felicity, superior to mortality; and, whilst this is my taste and ambition, you cannot wonder that I am desirous to subscribe myself, your, &c.

LETTER CXXI.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, 1730.

Mrs. Talbot hath at last prevailed on herself to read your letter; and though she was overwhelmed with tenderness and tears at your sense and partaking of her loss, yet your goodness gave her as great pleasure as it is possible for her to receive in her present condition. Nothing most certainly can afflict any heart with greater anxiety than grief, sickness, and the perplexity of preparing for a new, and, alas! different scene of life, than that in which she hath so long been happy; and all these unite to contribute their share to fill up her distress. If the respect of those who loved my Lord can any way lessen her feeling the sad change, she will always be secure of being treated in the best manner that the best people in the world can think it becomes them to behave towards one for whom my Lord had the highest affection and esteem. Every day presents us with some new melancholy scene, which awakens our grief, and seems to upbraid us with our loss.

At present inventories of all that belonged to him are making, in order to be disposed of; and among the rest his books must be sold; which obliges me to say, that in a short time we will send you down a catalogue of what belonged to him, among those which were sent to you, to desire that you would read those first, as being likely to be sooner wanted than the others. Though we may rob you of part of your entertainment, I hope we shall always be able to send others in the place of them; it is pity you should be deprived of that rational luxury you are fond of. The temper of your mind is most exactly described in a line of Pope's, corrected and improved by Thomson,

——A friend to learned ease,
Content with science in the vale of peace.

And since your ambition hath chosen the better part, it is the duty of all that value you, to take care that it shall not be taken from you.

There is a new piece of T. Chubb's * which will be soon published, containing a vindication of God's character, against those who represent him as approving his creatures, not in proportion to their goodness and resembling his own perfections; but requiring them to perfect those natural amiable graces by performances of no use or comeliness, but merely because they were appointed. He is insolent enough in his zeal of reason, to dare expostulate with no less a person than the Bishop of London, for injuring, as he terms it, in the simplicity of an

* Thomas Chubb was originally a mechanic at Salisbury; but, having an extraordinary faculty of reasoning, became a formidable controversialist, without the least knowledge of the classic languages. His first tract was against Dr. Clarke's doctrine of the Trinity. His opinions were absolutely heretical. He died 1747.

unlearned heart, the reputation of the Almighty, by abusing reason, the gift of God to man for his conduct; throwing the blame due to their negligence on the imperfection of his imparted light, which proved an *ignis fatuus* to mislead, instead of guiding them to his approbation and their duty. You shall see what common sense can do, when neither improved or spoilt by reading. I have got a bad habit of writing long letters; but I will not make an apology when I write to you, because you have the leisure to permit me to be impertinent; and if it is no otherwise agreeable, it will serve to give a variety to your solitude. I am your, &c.

LETTER CXXII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, 1730.

I HAVE your watch, which I will send to you by the first opportunity, that I can meet with, and at the same time send you the performance of Thomas Chubb against the Bishop of London*.

How saucy a thing is reason, to dare inspire an illiterate fellow to attack a man of profound learning and power, a very Goliah in controversy, and hope to destroy him by such a weak arm's throwing this smooth stone at his forehead! Fie upon the insolence of human reason! What success he hath, or ought to have, you will know when you read him. He will be railed at by the worldly-learned, the fashionable-wise, the much commended prudent; and admired by the very few truly knowing and good, and by all the libertines. For, alas! the dissolute think, pulling down any popular argument is pulling down the truth it was offered to support; and foolishly imagine, that destroying the indiscreet reasoning of any writer in defence of religion, is opposing the religion itself, and shewing there is nothing in it. And that unhappy voluntary blunder of the abandoned, hath given those, who defend and blend their own schemes and designs with religion, an unhappy opportunity to rail at all who do not submit to the whole of what they plead for, or do not approve of their treacherous manner of pleading for truth itself; they censure them for joining in with the enemies of religion and virtue, and by that means make the pious weak people detest those they see thus misrepresented. This intimidates more cautious people (who lament secretly the ill usage those can thus make of opposition to themselves) from opposing them. This hath prevented numbers from shewing that dislike of what hath been said to the dishonour of reasoning and substituting means, instead of (what is the perfection of God himself) goodness. But I have no time for such reflections.

Mrs. Talbot is so very ill, that Mrs. Sayer, though I do not, gives her over absolutely as gone: I think her case is extremely dangerous, but not desperate. She thinks she will not live many days, nor can she, if she grows not better soon: she continually vomits and purges, voids blood, and hath kept no nourishment since Sunday. Grief made her apply for consolation to, what she was never much used to, strong cordials; that treacherous flattering Syren, whom so many still believe, though they daily see the numbers it destroys, that gave, after short refreshment, a colic; this required larger doses, these again gave vomitings, which demanded still larger doses: the short ease was attributed to its power; but not the increase of misery which followed. The Doctor railed at it, his medicines came too late to overcome this evil soon; and therefore, in natural impatience of sickness, were despised; and the old short-lived interval of ease again desired, which still increased the distemper and disappointed all the remedies. Yours sincerely.

LETTER CXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Jan. 30, 1730-31.

MY rambling life is over, and now I shall have the leisure of performing the duty of writing to my friends; I have spent

* Entitled "A discourse concerning reason with regard to religion and divine revelation: wherein is shewn, that reason either is, or else that it ought to be, a sufficient guide in matters of religion: occasioned by the Lord Bishop of London's second pastoral letter, 8vo. 1730."

spent this Christmas in Berkshire, with Mr. Talbot and his delightful family. No man is more happy than he is, in the prospect of seeing many noble and great branches spring from his root. Wit and sprightliness, when they accompany good sense and virtue, will recommend the more worthy qualities, and make them doubly successful; and these are united in a sweet contrast in his second boy, who was this Christmas with us. There is a cheerful gravity in the next, which makes him thoughtful and industrious, but will preserve these useful accomplishments from————and that unsociable selfishness which too often deforms learning. The third is all life and gaiety, good-nature and innocence, with the fairest blossoms of reason, which the care of Mr. Talbot, in his education, will secure from being blasted, and ripen into abundance.

How mean a sight is the spring, with all its beauties, when compared to the opening of youth, with so full a promise of every virtue, to give joy to themselves, and happiness and ornament to their country! His eldest is at Paris, and behaves as one would wish he should behave. His rough English love for liberty disdains the embroidered slavery that glitters in that trifling court. He hates chains, though made of gold; and contemns a nation, who can be mean enough to be contented and in love with wretchedness, because it hath a painted face. With a sort of virtuous surliness, his good sense is so much offended at their flattery of those that oppress them, in that chain of mutual slaves and tyrants, that descends from the highest to the lowest among them, that one almost fears he should, instead of learning complaisance in that polite school of dissimulation, run counter to the manners he hates, and be in danger of growing in love with that plain dealing which is now no where fashionable, if his good sense and good-nature did not secure him from it: the first teaches all, that civility and obligingness is a virtue as much due, as more important branches of justice; the other, that benevolence in the heart will accommodate itself to all, and throw light and amiableness over the behaviour; and he that knows this, is well bred by nature, though he makes a bow awkwardly, and never learnt to cut a caper.

To-morrow Dr. Sayer and Mrs. Sayer return to London; the first is better; but Mrs. Sayer, I think, rather worse than usual;—think her illness is rather troublesome than dangerous. Mr. —— with his whole family are come safe to town, and have brought ——— with them, who every day grows a more delightful girl. She hath an ambition to obtain every accomplishment, and hath sense enough to use them, to purchase real esteem, not to nourish vanity. They promise to make themselves happy in seeing Miserden this summer in their journey from Bath. Mrs. Sandys' recommendations are never forgotten by me, though I cannot always have opportunity to shew I take notice of them.

The boy you recommended for a servant, I could provide for at present, in the best place he could desire, and in the way of preferment, if his age is not an objection. I should be glad to receive immediately an account of his stature, looks, age, and general character; if he hath the look of a boy, it cannot do; but if he hath a serious and decent appearance of a man, I may perhaps get over the difficulty of his real age, on account of his right accomplishments for such an employment as he will be put into. He must wear a livery, and constantly attend a man of the greatest dignity, and therefore the figure of a lad cannot be admitted. The post is going, and I will finish at present, but write to you a more entertaining letter speedily, I am, &c.

LETTER CXXIV.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, March 18, 1730-31.

I AM quite astonished, when I recollect how long since it was that I writ last to you, who ought to have been the last person in the world neglected by me. I have had of late, indeed, but little heart to write to any one, much less to you, before whom I would never willingly appear, but with spirit and good humour. But how could I have either, when a friend, whom I most sincerely, most tenderly love, hath been so long in danger? This is the fourteenth day in which poor George Sayer hath been struggling with a violent fever. You know Mrs. Sayer and

and the Doctor too well, not to feel what they have felt, under the anxiety for the sufferings, and the uncertainty for the life, of so delightful, so valuable a relation! I am almost afraid to say that we have any assurance, even yet, of his safety, so many accidents disappoint the credulity of hope, and make the promises of physicians of no more certainty than a fortune-teller's, though they often, perhaps, both contribute to bring about what they foretel, and by persuading the imagination that it must be, make it be. They at present comfort us with the expectation that all danger is over; and though this gives refreshment, it cannot restore quiet to the mind immediately, which hath been terribly wounded in that part of it which is most sensible, friendship. My concern hath been deeply increased, by having been confined from him. The many, many hours, that I have spent in gloom and solitude of late, have given my thoughts opportunity to torment themselves. Imagination in absence can augment every possibility of danger, and by his bad magic transform every trifle into a monster to terrify. Though I know I could have been of no service to him if present, yet not being present, makes me dread lest things are worse than they are represented, or than I should judge them if I saw them; and if wishing to be with a friend in sickness is not out of kindness to him, it is, at least out of a right kind of selfishness. I am uncertain whether you know the little misfortunes which prevent my attending him: about twenty five days ago, I was, in preposterous activity, skipping across the street to avoid a coach, my foot turned under me, and I fell in the kennel. I found I had hurt myself, but suspected only a strain, but it was discovered at last, that a little bone was broken, which time and patience alone will sodder, and make me a sound man again; and I am forced, to the mirth of my friends, and my own satisfaction, to stretch my enormous length of a leg on a couch, and be contented to be a prisoner for six or seven weeks, bound to my good behaviour. The pain I have endured is not comparable to the fatigue of doing nothing. If I could have been with those I love, it would have been an agreeable confinement, but whilst they are obliged to be at another place, it is terrible to me to be thus from them; but I have not time for complaints. Company hath been so good as to amuse me the greatest part of this day, and scarce left me time to say I hope soon to have an opportunity of sending you a more agreeable letter, and to assure you, that no one is more sincerely sensible of your goodness to him, than, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Durham, Sept. 24, 1731.

The joy with which you received my last false account of my dearest dearest friend's being out of danger*, will increase your affliction, at reading the dreadful account that I must now send to you. He was then, indeed, out of danger; but the blunders or wickedness of a physician, fatally of great reputation in this country, gave him that very night I sent away my letter, an *opiate* which hath killed him.

That dearest dearest creature died on Tuesday last, lamented by all: for he was the common friend of all, the joy of all that knew him. What will be your affliction! what is mine! how dreadful is poor Mrs. Sayer's! I wish we may be able to carry her alive to London! How can I ask you to pity us, who will equally want it yourself? for you saw his worth, and loved him accordingly. The tender things he said to me, when he feared that his life was endangered, from our sending for so many other physicians, shall never be forgotten by me. I loved nothing like him whilst he lived, and now he is gone, will love others in the proportion he loved them. I knew his sacred friendship for you, and this thought will increase towards you that of your, &c.

LETTER CXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Ashdown-Park, Friday morning, 1731.

The servant who brings you this is the person to whom the important trust of conducting the black colony into Wales

* Mr. George Sandys.

is

is committed; and I could not suffer any one to go from hence, without sending you an account of the health of that family for whom you have the goodness to be concerned. I hear that Mrs. Sayer is by no means worse than when I left her; that she appears with as much ease as she hath done since her misfortune, and though not with cheerfulness, yet with freedom. But I confess, I gather but little hope from these fair appearances, because in company with those she loves, her goodness would conceal, with a well-bred deceit, that pain which she knew would give pain to her company.

This little solitary island, in the midst of a vast verdant ocean, secured from the intrusion of chance company and the interruption of business, can afford no news to fill a letter. Every one that inhabits it, is gay and happy according to their various ranks and desires. Philosophy, exercise, and cards, hospitality profuse in generosity without luxury, freedom uncontrolled by any thing but voluntary decency and ever-wakeful reason, mirth that seems to neglect thoughtfulness, but shews, by its becoming ease and gracefulness, and insinuating instruction with amiable negligence every moment, that it hath used it much in private, as the carriage of a gentleman shews he hath learned to dance, though he doth not in company lead up a minuet or cut a caper, vary our hours, and heighten each other's pleasures by the perpetual change. All the nine Muses came hither with Mr. Thomson, wit and sprightliness with Billy, and wisdom (though she left her solemn state behind her) with the solicitor. From this description, you will imagine that I am very happy, though I contribute but little to the entertainment, besides becoming a pleased auditor, which is as essential a character to fill up a society, as that of the best performer in any of those delightful acts of diversion above mentioned. But no rapture can ever so engage my thoughts as to make me forget or neglect my friend, or lose an opportunity of assuring you that I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXXVII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, 1730.

I AM much concerned that the letter, which I sent you to Bath, did not come thither time enough to prevent your leaving it, in expectation of seeing Mrs. Talbot and myself at Miserdin—because your company to the unhappy family there, must give much greater pleasure than you could receive from us. And though there is nothing I so much long for, as a few hours free conversation with you, yet I hope I never shall be so selfish, as to desire that you should deny yourself the greatest satisfaction of your life, doing good; though it is to bestow on me the truest pleasure I know, the privilege of unburthening my thoughts in all the genuine sincerity and confidence of friendship, to one who is able to correct all my mistakes, advise in the most delicate difficulties, laugh at unreal fears, and chide for indulging improper expectations, which give more uneasiness by peevishness and unnecessary anxiety, than the ills we apprehend could do when they happen. I do not allude to any concerns of my own, in what I have mentioned. Though I am not so vainly self-denying, as to pretend that I am indifferent whether I am restored to my friends, and settled agreeably in my own country; yet I am resolved not to make my absence doubly disagreeable by repining and fretfulness. I will do all in my power to soften it, by deserving the kindness and regard of my new countrymen, and behave in a manner that shall make those, who contribute to my return, not ashamed of their zeal for me; or my friends here unwilling to receive me, if I shall be ever thought to deserve the favour of being recalled from my splendid banishment*. I have done all in my power, and I will not be unhappy, if others have it not in theirs to gratify my wishes. I know the thousand accidents and rivalries that may prevent their endeavours for me; and having already

* Dean swift always used this language in his correspondence with his English friends, probably with the same view, that of paying an oblique compliment to those of whose conversation he was necessarily deprived, rather than a reflection on the country which certainly deserved well of him.

obtained so much more of good fortune than I deserve, I will be easy if all is not granted to me I may desire; for I have learnt the wise lesson of being contented; and think there is no virtue and praise in doing so, in my affluence of every blessing of this world, excepting one, and that indeed is the chief of all, living in the company of those, that esteem and gratitude and affection make me prefer beyond all things; whose value for me is my honour, my merit, and my boasting: and which would be, alone, the highest reward. All here are in high health: we were, about a month since, not a little alarmed for the Chancellor, his cold was frightful, and Billy* quite outrageous in his apprehensions. You know the generous worthy impatience of his excellent heart, when those he loves are concerned. He was at once for his giving up the seals, and getting rid of the burthen of business, which he feared endangered the life of the best parent, as well as the best man, that ever lived. But fresh air, and three weeks exercise, have entirely recovered him, and he is now in as good spirits and cheerfulness of health, as I have ever remembered him.

Is it not quite disloyal in the winds and the waves to detain the monarch of the seas from his longing people, and make him do penance and keep Lent, whilst others are revelling in a carnival? But the perverseness continues, and we can now no more guess when he will be safe at St. James's, than he could thirty days ago. His late danger was as great as any man ever was in, that escaped.—The calm courage of Sir C. Wager preserved him. This adventure will teach any mortal humility, and make all sensible, that patience is a most heroic virtue, and ordained to be of service to a prince, as well as a plowman. The late attempt to return, which hath lost one man of war, and shattered many others, will most certainly fill every heart with the intrepidity of being calm and undisturbed in waiting until the west winds cease, and the sea is complaisant to their wishes. I hope the storms on the waters are not ominous of any at land; for there is a sad spirit kindled in the nation. Never were people so uneasy, though they have not one illegal thing to complain of. But I hope, notwithstanding, there will be a calm and serene season during the sessions of parliament.

My friend Thomson, the poet, is bringing another untoward heroine on the stage, and has deferred writing on the subject you chose for him, though he had the whole scheme drawn out into acts and scenes, proper turns of passion and sentiments pointed out to him, and the distress made as touching and important, as new, and interesting, and regular, as any that was ever introduced on the stage at Athens, for the instruction of that polite nation. But, perhaps the delicacy of the subject, and the judgment required in saying bold truths, whose boldness should not make them degenerate into offensiveness, deterred him. His present story is the death of Agamemnon.† An adulteress, who murders her husband, is but an odd example to be presented before, and admonish the beauties of Great-Britain. However, if he will be advised, it shall not be shocking, though it cannot be a noble story. He will enrich it with a profusion of worthy sentiments and high poetry, but it will be written in a rough, harsh style, and in numbers great, but careless. He wants that neatness and simplicity of diction, which is so natural in dialogue. He cannot throw the light of an elegant ease on his thoughts, which will make the sublimest turns of art appear the genuine unpremeditated dictates of the heart of the speaker. But with all his faults, he will have a thousand masterly strokes of a great genius seen in all he writes. And he will be applauded by those who most censure him.

My design is this: after Easter, I will get on horseback, and ramble to Bath, and spend a few days with the unhappy. Thence come to you, and stay with you until Jack‡ shall fetch me to Barrington. This is my wise intention, but whether I shall have courage to attempt so heroical an enterprise, or throw myself into a chariot, time alone can determine. I see what is right; but, like other weak mortals, fear I shall not be

* William, Earl Talbot.

† A tragedy by Thomson, acted at Drury-lane, 1738.

‡ The honourable John Talbot, third son of the Chancellor, afterwards a Welch Judge. He died Sept. 23, 1756.

able to accomplish my discreet resolutions.

My humble service to your neighbours. When I began my letter, I imagined I had nothing to say, fit to be intrusted to so frail a protection, as a little sealing-wax; but I find when one is in company with a person we value, the difficulty is not to find what to say, but when to give over; but though my pen hath no prudence and moderation, my paper obliges me to be no longer troublesome, but subscribe myself, your, &c.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Oh, Madam! Feb. 15, 1736-37.

The Chancellor, the best man that ever breathed, the best judge, the best father, the best friend, is dead!*—What, in his providence, doth the Almighty design to do in merited severity to punish this nation, by removing from it the person, whose wisdom and goodness united, was able and desirous to save it, to make it honest and happy? I dread to consider and foresee! What hath the public lost! What hath his dear deserving family! What have I! What have I not lost! I have lost him, whose friendship to me was the only merit to which I pretended, and my highest and truest reward. He died yesterday morning. His illness was an inflammation on his lungs. He continued only from Thursday till Monday five in the morning. The physicians say, to comfort us, and excuse themselves, or rather their ignorance, that he was worn out in the service of his country, and could not have lasted any time, had not this cold carried him off. He was but fifty-one: he might have blest, and done good to his country, thirty years longer. But God Almighty knows what is best for him, and properest for us. May he, in his anger, remember mercy! All parties unite to call him the best and greatest man that ever lived. The whole town, from the court to the city, are under the deepest astonishment, and shew in their countenance, that the nation is under some dreadful and public calamity. Great as he was allowed to be in his public character, you know he was more amiable, more delightful, in his domestic behaviour. Was there ever any so reasonably beloved as himself, by all, from the highest to the lowest, in his family? Did his children ever enjoy more ease, more cheerfulness, more sprightly innocence, and entertaining instructive unbendings to mirth, than in his conversation and laughter? Oh, Madam! what a series of disappointments is life! I came over to enjoy the company of the best friend that ever lived; I saw him, had daily new reasons to love and admire him, received daily new obligations, and lost him for ever! I hoped, by enjoying his wisdom and virtue for a few months, to have returned with spirit, and supported absence from him by the reflection of my having been with him, and might be with him again. Farewell all hope that my splendid banishment from my native country shall ever have an end. I must now withdraw, and sigh out my few remaining years in solitude, amidst strange company, since every place that I am hereafter to inhabit, will be empty of all, with whom I have contracted the sacred ties of friendship!—My poor dear Billy! what doth he suffer! You have seen him in agonies of fear, lest he should lose what he loves. He now hath lost what he loves above all things upon earth united; and what deserved his highest, his unexampled affection. Poor dear youth! I rejoice that I was in England when this fatal accident happened; if I can be of any consolation, any comfort, to that ever beloved youth!

In the last six years, how many friends have you and I lost in one family? And such friends, as the world cannot parallel! The Bishop of Durham, and Doctor Sayer, Mrs. Sayer, and her brother, and his son! Had the poor bishop lived, as he might from age, how miserable would this day have made him! They are happy; let us imitate them, and we shall be so too. We shall meet them again, and enjoy a friendship no more to be separated and clouded with tears, if we deserve it. We shall enjoy their friendship again, if we deserve it,

or

* Charles Talbot, Lord High Chancellor of England, died Feb. 14, 1736-37, universally lamented. He was allowed by all parties to have possessed the eloquence of Cicero, and the integrity of Cato. Thomson published a poem to his memory, replete with gratitude; and a very elegant delineation to his patron's character.

or be admitted to a degree of happiness, to which even their company, (how inconceivable must that degree of happiness be!) to which their company can be no addition:

You, Madam, will share our affliction severely, yet it is impossible to conceal it from you: and therefore, I thought it better you should hear it from me, than from common report; because the letter, which brings you word that you have lost one friend that loved you, will remind you that there are others which do so too, whilst there is a Talbot left in this nation, or I am alive to subscribe myself your affectionate friend.

LETTER CXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Madam, Feb. 22, 1736-37.

WHEN I wrote to you last I was under such amazement, and agony of concern, that I do not know what wild and improper things I might say to you; but be they ever so indiscreet and unbecoming my age and station, yet you will not only excuse, but be pleased with the sincere overflowings of an heart torn by the justest sorrow, before it had leisure to recollect and compose itself to a more decent and religious expression of what it felt. In no moment of my life shall I be less sensible of his loss than at present; but though it is impossible to be unmoved at the reflection, that we have been deprived of the noblest happiness which Providence had bestowed on us; yet often meditating on his unequalled virtues, will change grief into veneration, and raise and consecrate the pious melancholy into a solmn enjoyment, to be preferred to pleasure. All parties, in their public papers, are striving which shall profess the highest esteem and honour for him, and mention his behaviour in his great office, with the warmest gratitude and applause. These praises, which prove the greatness of our misfortune, bring, at the same time a consolation with them; it gives me a lovely view of mankind, to observe, that they all can drop their prejudices, and unite to reverence a truly great and admirable character. Nothing is universally popular but goodness! And every action of his life, in public or private, towards his friends or his enemies, flowed from that divine principle, in which alone we can obey that sublime precept of our Lord, (the sublimest that can be given to men or angels) *Be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect.* Did I name his enemies?—he had none; he hated none but ill men; nay, even for them he felt not hatred but pity. The virtues which mankind, in spite of their partialities and weakness, revere and desire should be everlastingly rewarded, must be infinitely pleasing to the Father of Mercies.—What men wish, he can bestow; and make those virtues live again for ever, which (the voice of human nature cries aloud) deserve never to die. It was the love for such benevolent characters, which first dictated to every nation the belief of the immortality of the soul. The learned expressed this affection by arguments, to prove the truth of this hope, which such worthiness had lighted up in their hearts. But the ignorant uttered the genuine sentiments of their nature, by worshipping these benefactors of mankind, as soon as they withdrew from the earth. They judged, that their goodness would secure them an interest in the Governor of the world, and recommend them to his love. What he loves, he will reward, in the manner which will make them most happy.—Enjoying the desire of the heart, is the sincerest felicity. The desire of their souls was always to make others virtuous and prosperous. New abilities to serve those above, whom they delighted to bless when below, they imagined, therefore, the only suitable and acceptable reward to such generous natures. Hence they concluded them appointed guardians over their kindred people, and from lamenting, were, by an enthusiasm of gratitude, misled to worship them. A love of merit thus betrayed them into error and superstition; but methinks virtue herself will plead and obtain pardon for such idolaters. It hath been observed, that the world have seldom done justice to characters till after men have been some time dead: but it hath not been so now. He was dear to his prince and the people whilst he lived, and equally mourned by both as soon as he is dead. He was trusted by the prince, as his most faithful and zealous servant; and regarded by the jealous nation, as

the warmest and most intrepid lover of their liberties; each thought their rights secure in his hands. To be a popular minister of state, is a felicity scarcely before exampled. But though scarcely before exampled, nothing seems more easy to any person, who hath his abilities, and will to imitate his integrity.

You knew the Chancellor, and loved him as well as I have done; but had I been writing to a stranger, I would have soothed my concern, by transcribing a sketch of his life. I could repeat almost every action, from his childhood to his death; and shew that he was uniform in his progress to virtue, and never once deviated from the severest of her precepts; severe in the judgment of the many, but to him an uninterrupted source of cheerfulness and tranquillity. I could mention such instances of filial piety, as would be hardly believed by others, but known to be true by you. How amiable an husband, how tender and generous a parent! His sons have often said, he never refused either of them any thing in his life; but that is their own, as well as his praise. He lived with them as a brother and a friend, and familiarized his wisdom into chit-chat, and instructed them more effectually by common conversation, than others could do by solemn precepts.

The nation, by their common sorrow, shew what a judge and statesman they have lost. My name will be ever a proof to posterity, how warm and intrepid a friend he could be to one he thought fit to honour and reward with that dear and voluntary relation to him. His distressed and melancholy family shew what a master he was to them all. In all these various relations, he was superior to any person whom I ever knew or read of. The day before he died, he said to his son Jack, "It is indifferent and equal "as to myself, whether I die now, or "seven years hence, but it will not be "the same to you; for the sake of my "children I could be pleased to remain "longer with them." The night he died, his servants offered him a medicine "It is in vain," he answered; "death "cannot be resisted; God's will be "done, I am satisfied." He immediately fell into a calm sleep, continued three hours in it, then awaked, looked round him a few moments, and died without the least struggle or pain. His distemper was an inflammation on his lungs; the natural cure of it is large bleeding, but on taking from him only eight ounces, he sunk so uncommonly much, that the Doctor dared not proceed. On opening him, a large polypus was found in his heart. From thence, probably, proceeded his not being able to lose blood. A polypus, say physicians, is the effect of care and intensenses of thought; if that is so, no man ever did more to cause it. He sacrificed his life for the good of others; and who will not envy a death so glorious? He lived enough to make himself beloved whilst living, and revered and lamented by good men of every party and denomination, now he is gone. He lived to perfect his temper to a love of goodness, and adorn it with every christian, as well as natural grace, that can make virtue either divine or amiable! he lived to obtain the best fame; he lived enough for himself, but not enough for his friends and his country. I am, Madam, yours &c.

LETTER CXXX.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, March 15, 1736-37.

I KNOW not to what my promise of waiting may come, because I have little reason to expect that a power of performing it will long be in me. I am seized again with my disorder most violently; how that will end, God only knows; and what he thinks most proper, will be most acceptable to me. Life is, and ought now to be, indifferent to me; I am a guest that have been nobly entertained; when the feast is over I will rise satisfied, and thank the great matser for his generosity. I have lived to see the best friend in the world die before me; and am of no service any longer in the world. The ruffle which my concern hath given me, has relaxed and dissolved my whole frame, and turned the humours again from a more painful into a more dangerous channel. But I submit, be the consequence what it will, to the disposal of Him who is equally good and wise.

Lord Talbot is well, may God preserve him so! There is not a more amiable or worthy man living; may his happiness be equal to his merit; my fondness for him desires no more. When I am dead, he will not want me; my loss, added to what he hath already, dear youth, sustained, will be as a drop thrown into the ocean. Oh! that it was in my power to make him as happy as I wish him, and then nothing in life should ever give him one moment's uneasiness! the whole family is well also. Lady Talbot hath an excellent understanding*, and a more sprightly entertaining wit, capable of making a considerable figure in public life, and giving cheerfulness, familiarized into easy chit-chat, to retirement and the speculations round an evening's table.

Jack will soon enter into his profession, and, I question not, succeed in it by his abilities, industry, and virtues, though he is not nourished and sheltered, and encouraged, by the example and instruction and recommendation of his great father. George † will steal into every one's esteem in a more silent way, will be beloved rather than shine with the eclat of noisy applause. He will spend this life in doing good in the most amiable not the most shewish way; he will have the dignity and generosity and character of his grandfather, secured from that only overflowing of his good qualities, which one wished had been prevented, to make him the most engaging of all characters. I love them all. I cannot flatter them to their faces; but I love to praise them. If I speak fondly with esteem of them even to their faces, it is only to warm them to be what I say; and shew them the virtues which are blossoming in their hearts, that must be ripened by their own care. Public news I do not attend to: I am weaned from my concern in the tumults and ambitions and scramble of life. If I do well you will see me; if I die you will remember me. Among the many who have highly valued you, none have done so more than myself, because none knew you better; and it will be always your singular advantage to improve on your acquaintance, and grow daily more beloved, by a nearer intimacy. If in any of those you love, you see any thing you wish otherwise, you will have the friendly freedom and courage that becomes virtue and independence, to say it with spirit and dexterity; and even venture to offend, to serve those you love. Without it, friendship is but flattery and treachery; with it, deservedly honoured with that divine character of being the medicine of life. This hint you will treasure up unmentioned, till you shall find you have an occasion to use it. Believe me, madam, yours most sincerely.

* This lady was the daughter and sole heir of Adam de Cardonnel, secretary at war in the reign of Queen Anne. She was married in February 1733-34, at the age of 15. She resided at Barrington until her death, in 1784. A very elegant monument, by Nollekens, is lately erected to her memory in the church of that parish.

† George Talbot, D.D. vicar of Guiting, in Glostershire.

LETTER CXXXI.

From the same to the same.

Madam, April 9, 1737.

I would not answer your kind letter, till I could give you an assurance that my disorder is stopt by bark, &c. but though I am relieved from this threatening illness, I cannot boast that I am a sound man again. My health resembles very much the season; one hour is sunshine; and the next, clouds deform the sky, and all is ruffled and blustering. But I am and ought to be contented. My life is not of general importance to a whole nation, as was that of my friend. His resembled the sun, which warms and enlightens half the earth at once; mine perhaps may be compared to a lamp, which serves to disperse the gloom of a single room; but when it is broken and extinguished, another will immediately supply its place, and the loss be of no consequence: but even this comparison, I feel, is vanity, and carries with it more praise than I can claim. I purpose to see you next month, though my friends will not be at Barrington till I am in Ireland; I will not leave this country without seeing one I most value in it. According to custom, I must give you trouble and employ you. Could get me a dozen of Cirencester cheeses, such as I once had; and order them to be sent to a trusty per-

son

son in Bristol, who should see them safe on board a Dublin ship, and directed for me? If of last year's making, and fit to eat, the better. I will desire also, that some of this season may be secured for me for another. Most of them will be dispersed in presents among those to whom I want to make little acknowledgements for great favours. I want black cloth enough to make two gowns and cassocks, the finest that can be procured, but not the thinnest; if you have a weaver that will deal honestly, direct him to send me 17 yards of his best.

Lord and Lady Talbot are well, and so is their girl: she is a delightful child*, and promises to have as much beauty and good temper as ever met together. But the first is a flower that may be blasted and spared; the other alone is sufficient to, and can alone make life happy.

Mrs. Secker is most astonishingly cured. I rejoice in it; the Bishop was compelled to exchange Bristol for Oxford by his friends, to serve the brother of his friend the Bishop of Salisbury. It is of no great advantage, and therefore not eligible. But it is always eligible to oblige those who can return the favour. I hope you enjoy the spring in the country, as much as we do in London, where it seems to give new life to every thing, in spite of the dust that chokes its favours to us. I will get out of it as soon as I can, and come to partake of its freshness with you on your mountain. My friend Jack seems inclined to lay out his fortune near you also, and fix the whole family in Glocestershire. I saw your good Bishop † yesterday, who is well, and speaks of you with an esteem and affection which will doubly endear him to, Madam, your &c.

* Cecil de Cardonnel, Baroness Dinevor, succeeded her father William Earl of Talbot, who was created Baron Dinevor by patent, October 21. 1780. with remainder to her and her heirs. She was married in 1756 to George Rice, Esq. Knight of the shire for the country of Carmarthen who died in 1779.

† Dr. Martin Benson.

LETTER CXXXII.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Mrs. Sandys.

Madam, May 21. 1737.

I SHOULD not forgive myself if I concealed from you any good fortune which had happened to any one of the Talbot family. Lady Decker, talking with me of the dear youths belonging to it, dropped, as if undesignedly, that she should think a daughter of hers happy, if disposed of to a young gentleman of such worth and merit, though with a younger brother's fortune at present, rather than a person born to an estate, and educated, as gentlemen generally now are, in all the fashionable arts of spending it. I observed, but seemed to disregard, the kind intimation, talked with my friend, who knew the good sense and most amiable tempers and right education of the young ladies, who are praised by all people: and he owned that such a match would make him happy. I immediately went to the lady, came to an explication with her; she introduced me to Sir Matthew; he at once told me that his desire was to dispose of his daughters in a way to make them happy: that he loved the Chancellor, and his family for his sake. He had heard of the merit of Mr. John Talbot from me, and others, and would give which daughter he chose, with ten thousand pounds down without settlements, and a promise of a third of all he was worth, when he and his wife were dead: and consented to allow him, for the first five years, four hundred *per annum* also, to assist them in their way of living till he was got into business. The next day Jack saw the ladies, chose the second ‡, and they will be married next Monday. Nothing was ever carried on with greater openness and generosity. Though I am in a great hurry, as you will imagine, having just married Leonidas § also to the handsomest woman in England, worth all the nine Muses, yet I could not omit giving you the satisfaction of knowing what I am sure will give you pleasure. I am, Madam, yours, &c.

† Henrietta Maria, second daughter of Sir Matthew Decker, Bart. She died without issue in September 1747.

§ Mr. Glover was married to Miss Nunn 21st May 1737.

LETTER CXXXIII.

From Miss Talbot to a new-born child, daughter of Mr. John Talbot, son of the Lord Chancellor.

You are heartily welcome, my dear little cousin, into this unquiet world; long may you continue in it, in all the happiness it can give, and bestow enough on all your friends to answer fully the impatience with which you have been expected. May you grow up to have every accomplishment that your good friend, the Bishop of Derry, can already imagine in you; and in the mean time may you have a nurse with a tuneable voice, that may not talk an immoderate deal of nonsense to you. You are at present, my dear, in a very philosophical disposition; the gaieties and follies of life have no attraction for you, its sorrows you kindly commiserate! but however, do not suffer them to disturb your slumbers, and find charms in nothing but harmony and repose. You have as yet contracted no partialities, are entirely ignorant of party distinctions, and look with a perfect indifference on all human splendour. You have an absolute dislike to the vanities of dress; and are likely for many months to observe the bishop of Bristol's * first rule of conversation, Silence; though tempted to transgress it by the novelty and strangeness of all objects round you. As you advance farther in life, this philosophical temper will by degrees wear off; the first object of your admiration will probably be the candle, and thence (as we all of us do) you will contract a taste for the gaudy and the glaring, without making one moral reflection upon the danger of such false admiration, as leads people many a time to burn their fingers. You will then begin to shew great partiality for some very good aunts, who will contribute all they can towards spoiling you; but you will be equally fond of an excellent mamma, who will teach you, by her example, all sorts of good qualities; only let me warn you of one thing, my dear, and that is, not to learn of her to have such an immoderate love of home, as is quite contrary to all the privileges of this polite age, and to give up so entirely all those pretty graces of whim, flutter, and affectation, which so many charitable poets have declared to be the prerogative of our sex: oh! my poor cousin, to what purpose will you boast this prerogative, when your nurse tells you with a pious care, to sow the seeds of jealousy and emulation as early as possible, that you have a fine little brother come to put your nose out of joint? There will be nothing to be done then but to be mighty good, and prove what, believe me, admits of very little dispute, (though it has occasioned abundance) that we girls, however people give themselves airs of being disappointed, are by no means to be despised; but the men unenvied shine in public; it is we must make their homes delightful to them; and if they provoke us, no less uncomfortable. I do not expect you to answer this letter yet awhile; but as I dare say you have the greatest interest with your papa, will beg you to prevail upon him that we may know by a line (before his time is engrossed by another secret committee) that you and your mamma are well; in the mean time, I will only assure you, that all here rejoice in your existence extremely, and that I am, my very young correspondent, most affectionately yours, &c.

* "Secker is decent." Pope, ut sup.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Dr. Thomas Rundle to Archdeacon S.

Dear Sir, Dublin, March 22, 1742-3.

A DIEU—for ever—Perhaps I may be alive when this comes to your hands—more probably not;—but in either condition, your sincere well-wisher.—Believe me, my friend, there is no comfort in this world, but a life of virtue and piety; and no death supportable, but one comforted by christianity, and its real and rational hope. The first, I doubt not, you experience daily—May it be long before you experience the second!—I have lived to be *Conviva satur,—passed through good report and evil report*;—have not been injured more than outwardly by the last, and solidly benefited by the former. May all who love the truth in Christ Jesus, and sincerely

cerely obey the gospel, be happy! for they deserve to be so, who (αληθειαν αγαπη) seek truth in the spirit of love.

Adieu!—I have no more strength.—My affectionate last adieu to your lady.

LETTER CXXXV.

Dr. Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Dear Sir, Barley*, Aug. 20, 1728.

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday at this place, upon my return home, having been for a fortnight upon a visit to some friends at Norwich†. Your letter unfortunately came hither the day after I left the place. I call it "unfortunately," because, though it was a circumstance I could not help, I am really concerned that so kind and obliging a remembrance of me should be so long without a suitable acknowledgement. You will excuse me if I take the opportunity from this last favour to profess myself much obliged to you for others which I have received from you, more particularly for that which stands distinguished in my memory as one of the most generous and disinterested offers of friendship which ever I received from any one, since I have been acquainted with the world‡. It is a circumstance in my life, which I remember with very particular gratitude to you and pleasure to myself. You are very kind again to follow me into my country retirement, and to withdraw yourself from the conversation of your friends in town to pay me a visit here; for, next to doing it in person, a letter is the most acceptable thing. It is next to the countenance of a friend, and, like that, inspires a certain cheerfulness and vivacity; a thing which is sometimes wanted in the country; for, whatever we may think of the pleasures of solitude and contemplation, in the noise and hurry of company and business, life cannot pass off any where agreeably, without the intercourse of friendship and conversation; and this intimation you will please to accept from me as bespeaking a continuance of that correspondence, which you have so obligingly begun.

I have not seen the pamphlet you mention, but am exceedingly, pleased with the passages which you have quoted out of it. The clearness of the reasoning and the strength of it, bespeak either Dr. Clarke its author, or some other very able hand. As to the question itself, my sense of it is, that the reasonableness of virtue is its true foundation; and the Creator has formed our minds to such a quick perception of it, that it is, in almost every occurrence of human life, self-evident; but then I am for taking in every possible help to support and strengthen virtue, beauty, moral sense, affection, and even interest; and it seems to me, as if the Creator had adapted various arguments to secure the practice of it, to the various tempers of men and the different solicitations which they meet with. And virtue, thus secured and guarded, may, perhaps, not unfitly be compared to these buildings of a Gothic taste, which, though they have a good foundation, are furnished nevertheless (against all accidents) with many outward supports and buttresses, but so contrived and adjusted by the architect that they do not detract from, but even add to the beauty and grandeur of the building.

I shall expect, with great pleasure, your critical essay, which will be safely conveyed to me if left for that purpose with Mr. Herring, a draper at the Golden Artichoke in Lombard-street. I am, &c.

* Near Royston, in Hertfordshire. Dr. Herring had been collated to this rectory, by Bishop Fleetwood, of Ely, to whom he was chaplain, Dec. 7, 1722. He was at this time also preacher to the society of Lincoln's Inn, having been so appointed in 1726.

† Dr. Herring was born in Norfolk, at Walsoken, of which his father was rector, in 1693.

‡ This refers to two letters (first printed, with out a name, in the Whitehall Evening Post, in March and April 1728) in justification of the doctrine maintained in a sermon preached by Dr. Herring, at Lincoln's-Inn chapel, which had occasioned a great clamour, on account of its alluding to the Beggar's Opera, then exhibiting at the neighbouring theatre, and presuming to condemn it as of pernicious consequence to the practice of morality and christian virtue. Experience confirmed the truth of this observation, by the many robberies committed daily in the streets during the representation of that piece, beyond the example of former times: and several thieves and robbers afterwards confessed in Newgate, that they raised their courage at the playhouse, by the songs of their hero Macheath, before they sallied forth on their desperate nocturnal exploits.

LETTER CXXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Barley, Sept. 16, 1728.

I HAVE a letter of yours now before me which I cannot tell how to answer in the manner which I ought; it is so very obliging that I cannot satisfy myself with only returning thanks for it in the usual style, unless you will promise to give a much stronger signification to "the usual "style," than it commonly bears; and in that sense, let it be as high as you please, I desire my thanks may be conveyed to you. This is the more due to you, because we correspond upon such unequal terms; and while you send me letters full of entertainment, I make my return in letters full of—nothing.

I was exceedingly pleased with the verses to Euryalus,* and never read any in that strain which are good without reflecting how well it would go with the world if the Muses were always retained in the service of virtue.

I have read over your criticisms upon Tindal's translation,† and think them exceedingly just and necessary; such hasty mercenary translators really put an affront upon the public, and seem to take for granted that men have neither taste nor judgement. The inaccuracies of style and lewnesses of expression, and the many omissions in this translation, are prodigiously offensive. The history of Rapin Thoyras is so much debased and mangled by them, that one would think the translator had a design upon his character, and intended to make him appear ridiculous, by putting him into an awkward English dress; for really, if Mr. Tindal does not take a little more pains, Rapin Thoyras will become of the same class with the rest of our English historians. The Guardian,‡ I remember, has made a few very just observations upon the style of the great Lord Verulam, which if Mr. Tindal had considered, he would not have fallen, as he often does, into that very vulgar and abject manner of expression.

The most considerable part of your letter is still behind; for I do assure you, notwithstanding it was all acceptable to me in a peculiar manner, there was a little postscript at the bottom of it, which drew my attention more than all the rest. There was something so genteel, and at the same time so sincerely kind in it, that I must put it upon you as a friend, to help me out in making my acknowledgements. It seems you call such services trifles. I do not think them so; but if your judgment was true, Mrs. Duncombe has shewed that she has so much of her sex's art, as to set off even trifles to prodigious advantage.

October now draws near, and if you retain your design of coming this way. I shall be glad to see you at Barley; but must insist upon it, that you acquaint me with the time, that I may be sure not to be at Cambridge. I am, &c.

LETTER CXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Barley, Sept. 20, 1730.

I HAVE been rambling ever since our commencement, and am but just returned to the place where in duty I ought to have been resident; but we bachelors being an unsettled generation of people, our friends think we have no home of our own, and that they have a claim to as much of us as they please. I received your very kind and agreeable letter with most particular pleasure, and can truly say, that your epistolary visit gave me as much entertainment as any I have received or paid since I saw you, though I have spent a good deal of time among my choicest friends. You gratify me more than you are aware of, in imagining that I am a lover of children, and I am particularly pleased to hear that your little boy thrives so well with you. I can assure you, in a little time I shall expect an account of the young gentleman in his own hand-writing, for I have a small correspondent about his size, who had rather take the pen into his mouth than his hand—but for all that, he writes very prettily.

Mr. Duncombe is very happy, and you, I am sure, have your share of satisfaction in so promising a youth as your nephew

* Mr. John Carleton, on his coming of age.

† Of Rapin's History, in a pamphlet, entitled "Remarks on Mr. Tindal's Translation, &c. In a "Letter to S. T. [Sigismund Trafford] Esq."

‡ Vol. I. No. xxv.

nephew's.* I read his copy of verses:† I will not say I was pleased with them, because my judgement would do the author no credit; but I shewed them to a friend of mine, a man of letters, and a good-natured critic, and he was much entertained. I urged him to look them over again with exactness, and he then found no other fault but with *damnata pati*,‡ of which phrase he questioned the latinity, and he apprehended *a* in *Arabicos*, and *do* in *Eudocia*, to be both short; this was his criticism. If it be right, it gives me no uneasiness; and I am sure it will give you none. You see I am forced to go to other heads for criticism, and therefore you must not expect that from me; but pray send me as many verses as you please for entertainment, and if they entertain me as well as these did, I defy the critics to put me out of humour with them

The living§ you observed given to one of my name, was to a relation,‖ but he has been in possession of it a twelvemonth; such is the exactness of our news-writers. I shall leave this country within a week till term. The beginning of October I shall be at a friend's in Surry, Mr. Frankland's,¶ at Stoke near Guildford. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Dr. Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Blechingly, near Ryegate
Dear Sir, Sept. 23, 1731.

THIS is the first half hour that I could properly call my own, for some weeks, and I am glad to employ it in conversing with you.

I thank you most heartily for your very kind congratulation, upon my promotion to this good living;** I am, I own, pleased with it, and hope I may say, I am sure I ought to say, contented. I bless Providence for so ample a provision for me, and leave it entirely to his goodness as to the future enjoyment of it: but though I am contented myself, you, I find, with the solicitude of a friend, will be extending your care for me still farther, and prophesying I know not what promotions. If you have a divinity in you, and things should happen so, I hope I shall have the grace to consider every such accession, as only an opportunity of doing good, and, if I am in that temper, I am sure you would stand in the foremost rank of those I should be happy to oblige; and, if I am not, I give you liberty to condemn me, as much as I shall one day ahhor myself. I do not love many words, and therefore shall only assure you, that I am proud of the compliment you pay to my sincerity, in unbosoming yourself as you do to me, and that you may assure yourself, at all times, of every kind assistance from me that a true friend can give.

It is a pleasure to me to hear that your little boy improves so much, and I congratulate you upon the indications he gives of a good and compassionate temper. It is a soil, I know, that you will cultivate with most particular pleasure. I shall be very glad to introduce Junius Brutus†† into the company of Lady Jekyll;‡‡ I am sure she is a friend to the true spirit of Roman liberty. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Blechingly, Jan. 19, 1734.

You do too much honour to my judgment in consulting me upon the affair you do; but your doing it gives me more pleasure than ever; it sooths that vanity which is in some sort natural to us all, and gives me the satisfaction of perusing what you write, and of hearing news of

* Mr. Lewis Duncombe, then a gentleman commoner, of Merton College, Oxon. where he died of the small pox in the 20th year of his age, December 26 following.

† On the death of Mr. Hughes.

‡ O semper damnata pati fata aspera virtus!

§ Carleton in Nottinghamshire.

‖ Dr. William Herring, afterwards Chancellor and Residentiary of York.

¶ Frederick Frankland, Esq. (afterwards one of the commissioners and controller of the Excise.) Dr. Herring's contemporary at Jesus, College, Cambridge.

** Dr. Herring had been presented to it by Sir William Clayton, Bart. as he was a few months after to the Deanery of Rochester by by the King, where he was installed Feb. 5, 1731-2.

†† A tragedy by Mr. Duncombe.

‡‡ Lady of Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls.

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the lettered world. I think your dedication* to Lord Cowper very genteel, and in no degree guilty of the common fault of those pieces, flattery. I shall be pleased to see this tragedy† of Lillo's; his George Barnwell has something very touching in it. I think I do not quite like this interweaving scripture phrases. This may sound odd from a clergyman, but I say it from the motive of that character. It is to expose those venerable books too much to the hazard of ridicule; it is, perhaps, something like divesting the magistrate of his robes of honour, and turning him to a mad and prejudiced populace, in the nakedness of a common man. The books of scripture are, no doubt, most excellent themselves: but their veneration (as the world is) must, like magistracy, be in some measure supported by outward circumstance and ceremony. Truth is very amiable naked, but subjected the more to be injured by those who have no taste of her beauty.

You will much oblige me in sending me the public judgment about books that come out, now and then, that I may know the better how to give orders to my bookseller. I am dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXL.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Rochester, Nov, 9, 1735.

I SAY not a word of the honesty of such proceeding, but there would be a sort of scurvy policy in it if I should write to you with the air of knowing nothing of your most obliging letter of the 16th of August last, but endeavour at the credit of beginning a correspondence (always most entertaining to me) *de novo*; but truth would perhaps pop out to shame me before I was aware, and therefore I shall go the old way to work, own the receipt of your letter, and ask pardon for my unmannerly silence. I received it at this place, and carried it with me into Surry, determining to answer it from thence. I was very little at home, and all that little most laboriously idle, so I brought it back again to Rochester, and it now lies before me. You will pardon me, if I burn it as soon as I have answered it, to get out of the way of such an ungrateful remembrancer, for I am pretty sure I shall have no reproaches from you.

I see no reason for such a prodigious outcry upon the "Plain Account‡," &c. I really think it a good book, and as to the sacrament in particular, as orthodox as Archbishop Tillotson: his prayers are very long, but in my poor opinion some of the best compositions of the sort that ever I read; and if I could bring my mind to that steady frame of thinking with regard to the Deity, that is prescribed by him, I believe I should be so far as happy as my nature is, perhaps, capable of being. There is something comfortable in addressing the Deity, as the father, not the tyrant, of the creation.

I would fain think as well of Mr. Pope's probity as I do of his ingenuity; but his compliments to Bolingbroke, upon topics of behaviour, in which he is notoriously infamous, shock me so, that it quite disconcerts my good opinion of him. I have bought his works, however, in the pompous edition, and read them with peculiar pleasure. The brightness of his wit, his elegant turns, his raised sentiments in many places, and the musical cadence of his poetry, charm me prodigiously.

I think I must wish you joy of the approaching peace§. It seems much for his Majesty's, and the English honour. I hope it will have a good issue. If any thing new of moment appears, you will communicate it in your usual obliging manner. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXLI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Rochester, Dec. 17, 1735.

I AM exceedingly ashamed that I should be so long in answering two very kind letters of yours. I have been hindered in some measure by the business of our audit, and you will please to accept that excuse, so far as it will justly go. With your

* Of Mr. Hughes's poems.

† Elmerick, or Justice Triumphant, founded on a true story in Vertot's History of the Knights of Malta.

‡ "Of the Sacrament," by Bishop Hoadly.

§ Between the Emperor, France, Spain, and Sardinia, by the mediation of Great Britain.

your letters I received a most obliging present of a book*, for which, however, I am quite angry with you, and will think of some method of shewing my resentment. It is the most agreeable book I ever beheld; and I own (though perhaps there is something childish in it) I read Horace with a better *goût*, and a better understanding, for the fine embellishments. Did you ever see a Dutch edition of Telemaque, of peculiar beauty?

I hope to be in London some time in the spring, and will give you notice of it; and if you chuse to defer it till then, shall be glad to wait upon you to Lord Hardwicke. I shall be very glad to see you in the summer; if nothing happens to interrupt my scheme, I propose to spend a greater part of it than usual at Blechingley.

Mr. D'Oyley† spent an evening with me lately: he is much your humble servant, and a very genteel and agreeable companion. I had seen Mr. B——'s imitations‡ (for so they are called) before you wrote to me, and think the several styles are most ingeniously hit off. I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CXLII.

Dr. Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Dear Sir, Blechingley, Feb. 25, 1735.

I RECEIVED your letter, and was indeed extremely affected with the bad news of your loss. It is most certainly a prodigious one to you, and has carried off a great share of your happiness. I do not wonder to hear it got the better of your philosophy. Nature is too strong for reason and speculation, and the finest sayings of the finest moralists are flat and unaffecting upon these trying occasions. The only thing that can give the mind any solid satisfaction, is a certain complacency and repose in the good Providence of God, under a sincere conviction that he orders every thing for the best.

I am glad you have got the better of your own indisposition; the loss of both parents would have been a blow to your poor boy, in which his friends would have felt for him exceedingly.

I read over your wife's letter, and it melted me into tears; and to say the truth (she is now incapable of being flattered), I was not less edified with the sincerity, and wisdom, and constancy of her mind, than I was affected with the tenderness of her concern for her husband and her child . . . . . I thank you for the favour of the ring, and am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CXLIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Rochester§, Nov. 3, 1738.

I HAVE taken up your kind letter three times to answer, and as often been interrupted. I brought it with me to this place yesterday, and resolved not to miss another post. I thank you most affectionately for your obliging inquiry after me, and I bless God, have the satisfaction to inform you, that I am very well, after the most agreeable journey I ever had in my life. We travelled slowly and commodiously, and found Wales a country altogether as entertaining as it was new. The face of it is grand, and bespeaks the magnificence of nature, and enlarged my mind so much, in the same manner as the stupendousness of the ocean does, that it was some time before I could be reconciled again to the level countries. Their beauties were all in the little taste: and, I am afraid, if I had seen Stow in my way home, I should have thrown out some very unmannerly reflections upon it; I should have smiled at the little niceties of art, and beheld with contempt an artificial ruin, after I had been agreeably terrified with something like the rubbish of a creation. Not but that Wales has its little beauties too, in delightful streams and fine valleys; but the things which entertained me were the vast ocean, and ranges of rocks, whose foundations are hid, and whose tops

* The works of Horace, engraved on copperplates by Mr. Pine.

† Vicar of St. Nicholas, Rochester.

‡ The Pipe of Tobacco, in imitation of six several authors [viz. Dr. Young, Ambrose Philips, Thomson, Cibber, Pope, and Swift], by Mr. Hawkins Browne. The plan was suggested to him, and the imitation of Philips supplied, by the late Dr. John Hoadly.

§ Atterbury.—His Lordship held this deanery in commendam with his bishopric.

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reach the clouds. I know something of your cast of mind, I believe; and I will therefore take the liberty to give you an account of an airing one fine evening which I shall never forget. I went out in the cool of the day, and rode near four miles upon the smooth shore, with a vast extended view of the ocean, whose waves broke at our feet in gentle murmurs; from thence we turned into a village, with a neat church and houses, which stood just at the entrance of a deep valley; the rocks rose high and near, at each hand of us, but were, on one side, covered with a fine turf, full of sheep and goats, and grazing herds; and, on the other, varied with patches of yellow corn, and spots of wood, and here and there a great piece of a bare rock projecting. At our feet ran a stream, clear as crystal, but large and foaming, over vast stones rudely thrown together, of unequal magnitudes, and over it a wooden bridge, which could scarce be said to be made by the hands of art; and, as it was the evening, the hinds appeared, in many parts of the scene, returning home with pails upon their heads. I proceeded in this agreeable place, till our prospect was closed, though much illuminated, by a prodigious cataract from a mountain, that did, as it were, shut the valley. All these images together put me much in mind of Poussin's drawings, and made me fancy myself in Savoy, at least, if not nearer Rome. Indeed, both the journey, and the country, and the residence, were most pleasing to me.

Your letters always entertain me, as your last did by an agreeable poem; and, in some sort of return, I cannot help mentioning a French book to you which I brought in the coach with me, "*Le "Paysan parvenue**." It is a book of gallantry, but very modest; but the things which entertained me, were the justness of some characters in it and the great penetration into human nature. I am your, &c.

* By Marivaux.

LETTER CXLIV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Rochester, Dec. 16, 1740.

I AM sure it is high time for me to make my acknowledgements to you for two most entertaining letters. Your reproofs of my ingratitude are very genteel, but very strong and efficacious; and there is no bearing the reprimand of a second obliging letter, when the first had been neglected.

The verses you sent me are very sensible and touching, and the sentiments in them, I doubt not, exhilarated the blood for some time, and suspended the black execution; but his distemper, it may be said, got the better, and carried him off at last. I would willingly put that construction upon these melancholy accidents, and then leave the sufferers to the Father of mercies. I read them to a young gentleman here, a Wrexham man, who knew the author, and lived in that country with an uncle who was intimate with him.

I have been amused, in my leisure hours from business, with "Anti-Ma-"chiavel;" indeed, much entertained with him. You know the author is a royal one*; and if he puts his speculations into practice, if bad times should come, and honest men be forced to quit Old England, I would endeavour, if I could support that character, to put myself under his government and protection. He has exposed, very justly, the littleness of Machiavel's principles, who formed his maxims among the petty states of Italy, and supported the justness of them upon the example of a Cæsar Borgia. In my opinion, this book of the king of Prussia is much more in the style and character of a great prince, than the celebrated Εἰκὼν Βασιλικὴ, unless we are to suppose every Christian prince to support the two characters of king and priest; for the book last mentioned is more agreeable to the sacred function, as I believe, in real truth, it was the work of one of us. I am, &c.

* The king of Prussia.

LETTER CXLV.

Dr. Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Bishop-Thorp*,
September 15, 1743.

Dear Sir,

When I have given you a short account of myself from the middle of May, when I left London, you will easily see the reason of my silence with regard to a friend's correspondence, whom I have now known many years, and truly esteemed as many; I have been extremely entertained by both your letters, but, literally speaking, it has been hardly in my power to thank you for them, my time has been to parcelled out, in spite of any schemes of my own. I was above a fortnight upon the road, before I reached Bishop-Thorp, and immediately entered here upon a new round of compliments and entertainment, from which I retreated, after ten days, by changing the scene, and fulfilling my second plan of visitation. After a short recess, I entered upon a third, and, at a proper distance of time, upon a fourth, which ended a fortnight ago; and completed my visitation. I bless God for it, I have finished the work, not only without hurt, but with great pleasure to myself, and I returned home with great satisfaction of heart, for having done my duty, and acquired a sort of knowledge of the diocese, which can be had by nothing but personal inspection. I have traversed, by this means, a prodigious tract of ground, seen all possible variety of country, many rich and populous towns, and some of the finest seats of the kingdom; and, what may give you, by the rules of proportion, a great idea of the importance of this district of England, I am confident I have confirmed above thirty thousand people. I could enter, with pleasure, into a minute description of every thing that fell within my observation; but I chuse to reserve that, to fill up some agreeable hours when you favour me in the winter with your company at Kensington, where I purpose to be, God willing, before November. But I cannot omit the pleasure I took in my last expedition, which was a visit to Castle-Howard† (where I spent two days), where there is every provision for elegant life, which pleasure and magnificence, conducted with the best œconomy, can afford. I fancy you are acquainted with this noble seat; for Mr. Bewlay, who is your humble servant and friend; told me you spent some time at York a summer or two ago. I have had some little intercourse with Mr. Bewlay, with whose manner I am much taken. I hope he is as honest as agreeable.

I am in great pain for our affairs in Germany. I pray God send us a good account of them, and, as soon as may be, a lasting peace; for we have heard more than enough of the devastations of war, and famine, and plague, things that shock all philosophy, and can only be solved by a religion founded in a future life.

Without a bit of flattery, I must commend your epistle to to Iccius‡, which is easy and natural, and a just expression of the poet's sense in one of his most useful hours, when he had laid aside the gallant, and put on the air of the philosopher. I shall take it as a testimony of your friendship, which I desire to continue and improve, if you will favour me, now and then, with any pieces of your own, or such as you approve of others. I am, &c.

* Near York. Dr. Herring had been translated to the archiepiscopal see (on the death of archbishop Blackburn) in the April preceding the date of this letter.

† The seat of the Earl of Carlisle.

‡ Translated from Horace, b. i. epist. 12.

LETTER CXLVI.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Duncombe to Archbishop Herring.

Firth-street, June 10, 1744.

Mr. Pope, I hear, has left the bulk of his fortune to Mrs. Blount, a lady to whom, it is thought, he either was, or, at least, ought to have been married. The Earl of Marchmont, Lord Bathurst, Mr. Murray§, and Mr. Arbuthnot‖, are his executors. He has bequeathed all his manuscripts to Lord Bolingbroke.

I am told that he has left many plans and fragments, but few finished pieces. A report is spread about town, that, dur-

§ Now Earl Mansfield.

‖ Of the court of exchequer, only son of Dr. Arbuthnot.

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ing his illness, a dispute happened, in his chamber, between his two physicians, Burton (who is since dead himself*) and Thompson; the former charging the latter with hastening his death, by the violent purges he had prescribed, and the other retorting the charge. Mr. Pope at length silenced them, by saying, "Gentlemen, I only learn, by your discourse, that I am in a very dangerous way; therefore all I have now to ask is, that the following epigram may be added, after my death, to the next edition of the Dunciad, by way of postscript:

"Dunces, rejoice, forgive all censures past;
The greatest dunce has kill'd your foe at last."

However, I have been since told, that these lines were really written by Burton himself; and the following epigram, by a friend of Thomson, was occasioned by the foregoing one:

"As physic and verse both to Phœbus belong,
So the College oft dabble in potion and song;
Hence Burton, resolv'd his emetics shall hit,
When his recipe fails, gives a puke with his wit."

Dr. Thomson is going to publish Pope's case. I find he is in high repute with several persons of distinction.

I shall leave the doctor and Mr. Pope, with a few lines taken from a poetical epistle, addressed many years ago to the Duke of Chandos, by my friend, Dr. Cowper,† which might pass for an encomium on the latter, if he had made a proper application of his wit and fine genius.

"Good-natured wit a talent is from heaven,
For noblest purposes to mortals given;
Studious to please, it seeks not others harm,
Cuts but to heal, and fights but to disarm.
It cheers the spirits, smooths the anxious brow,
Enlivens industry, and chases woe;
In beauteous colours dresses home-spun truth,
And wisdom recommends to heedless youth;
At vice it points the strongest ridicule,
And shames to virtue every vicious fool!
Like you, my Lord, it all mankind invites,
Like you instructs them, and like you delights."

I is impossible to write a letter now, without tincturing the ink with tar-water. This is the common topic of discourse both among the rich and poor, high and low; and the Bishop of Cloyne has made it as fashionable as going to Vauxhall or Ranelagh. Dr. Carlton (a physician, who lives in the Duke of Bedford's family) thinks it may be useful in several cases, but dislikes the Bishop's manner of preparing it, in which he thinks the infusion of tar much too strong. However, the faculty in general, and the whole posse of apothecaries, are very angry both with the author and the book, which makes many people suspect it is a good thing. All that I know of it is, that it has relieved two of my friends from stubborn coughs; at least, they themselves think so.

I have undertaken to be editor of the work‡ mentioned in those proposals, for two reasons:

First, I really think it worthy the view of the public; and the essays, in particular, filled with curious and uncommon thoughts; and,

Secondly, I hope the publication may be of some service to a very good woman, in the decline of life, and one of the best of daughter.§

In a letter from a correspondent at York are these words:

"Our worthy diocesan is now at Bishop-Thorp, and every day rising in the esteem of this extensive county. The clergy and laity seem to vie with one another in their affection towards him."

The former part of this letter was written before Mr. Pope's will was printed. It seems he was under an odd perplexity about extreme unction. If he did not receive it, it would disgust the catholics; if he did, and should recover, his protestant friends would rally him. It is likely he thought of it, as Augustus of Poland did of his bead roll *C'est une bagatelle*. I am, my Lord, &c.

* He survived Mr. Pope not above ten days.

† Son of Judge Cowper, then rector of Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, and one of his Majesty's chaplains

‡ "Poems on several occasions, and two critical essays, viz. the first on the harmony, variety, and power of numbers, whether in prose or verse, and the other on the numbers of Paradise Lost; written at the desire of Mr. Richardson the painter, in one volume quarto, by Mr. Samuel Say." These essays have been much improved by the best judges. Mr. Say was a dissenting minister in Westminster. He died in 1743.

§ Married to Mr. Toms, a dissenting minister, at Hadleigh, in Suffolk.

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LETTER CXVII.

Archbishop Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorpe, July 1. 1744.

You were very obliging in sending me the account you did of Mr Pope, for we were so far from knowing any of those particulars of his exit, that we were but just sure that he was gone. He wanted nothing but good-nature, and the spirit of true freedom (which he had only in idea,) to make him excellent; and yet, perhaps, his acrimony was the sting of the bee, for such he was, rather than a wasp.

Though we are so backward in some sort of intelligence, we are perfectly acquainted with the virtues of tar-water; some have been cured, as they think, and some made sick by it; and I do think it a defect in the good Bishop's recommendation of it, that he makes it a catholicon: but, I dare be confident, he believes it such.

I cannot tell what the good people of London think of our public affairs. We that judge two hundred miles from the capital, are not without our apprehensions. There is something disagreeable to reflect, that we are secured at home by strangers;* and abroad, if not at the mercy of our enemies, yet, certainly, upon the defensive. I see, by a letter from the camp, that our officers there are quite angry with the Dutch, but, perhaps, they are more the objects of pity.

I shall be extremely pleased with half a dozen copies of Mr. Say's book. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CXLVIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorpe May 15, 1745.

I was sorry, in my little hurry of business before my journey, that I lost the opportunity of seeing you. I thank you and your son for the agreeable present that was left me. I congratulate you upon the hopeful prospect you have of your son's ingenuity, and I pray God continue him in the same sense of his duty which I know you have been careful to instil into him. I shall be glad to be some way instrumental to it, by recommending him to a good tutor, which, I am very well assured, Mr. Heaton, of Bene't, is; for such is his character to me, and I know he is a person extremely acceptable to the present master of the college, Mr. Castle, to whom I will take the liberty to recommend your son, by giving him a letter to him, if you please to give me notice of the precise time of his going for admission.

Our news from Flanders has been disagreeable enough†, and yet there is a mixture of honour in the disappointment, which gives one spirits and hopes; and it is certainly better to miscarry in the field of battle, through temerity, than cowardice. I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CXLIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorp, July 29, 1745.

I am in your debt for three letters, the last of which met me here, at my return out of Nottinghamshire, where I went to visit a friend,‡ snug and private, as I hoped, but I found it quite otherwise, and am really returned to this place for retirement. However, my journey was very agreeable. I paid some compliments to great folks, who love to be complimented, and got into the acquaintance and characters of some of the principal gentry in that part of my diocese.

I thank you for your offer of the curiosities, I mean the forms of prayer collected by Mr. Say;§ but as I am never likely to be employed in forming compositions of that sort for the public,‖ that work being in the province of Canterbury, they will be of no use to me; for common use, the common form will serve my purpose.

* 6000 Dutch troops.

† The battle of Fontenoy, May 1.

‡ Dr. William Herring, rector of Carleton.

§ On public occasions, from the time of archbishop Laud.

‖ Unlikely as it was, this event, however, did soon happen.

I was

I was extremely pleased to hear of your kind reception at Cambridge. If I had had no hand in it, the good master's natural temper would have prompted him to have behaved towards you in the manner that he did. I dare say you will have no reason of any kind to repent your son's admission into Bene't college, where I wish him every possible success. Tom Pyle* is a learned and worthy, as well as a lively and entertaining man. To be sure, his success has not been equal to his merit, which yet, perhaps, is in some measure owing to himself, for that very impetuosity of spirit, which, under proper government renders him the agreeable creature he is, has, in some circumstances of life, got the better of him and hurt his views.

Your last letter brought me very disagreeable news, and I began to think, that it was really *Hannibal ad portas*, and so it will prove, if Ostend be taken.† This acquisition in North America‡ is something, and, I suppose, pleases the merchants. Sure it is not possible for the Dutch to act the part of which they are suspected. If they do, let France be our ally, and lord of the Seven Provinces! An open enemy is a friend, compared to a secret and perfidious one. By this means they would reduce the royal duke to the *Fauces Caudinæ*.§ I am, &c.

LETTER CL.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorpe, Oct. 15, 1745.

I was extremely mortified at a letter today from Mr. Herring, in which he told me, that he had not sent you a sermon|| and speech,¶ because he did not know where you lived. I ask your pardon for being so careless; but, indeed, I had given him my orders to you (as was right, I am sure) among the first of my friends.

You see what a bustle these ruffians have made in the nation. I little thought I should have been the subject of so much observation at this juncture, my meaning being only to discharge my duty in my proper sphere and station; but, be the event what it will, I hope I shall have the grace never to repent of doing my best service to my country.

Our best intelligence from the North seem to agree, that the rebels are much divided, and, I hope in God the next news will be, that they are in confusion. What is the matter in the city of London? there is a jealousy and gloominess, quite disagreeable; and I hear a discouraging account of Oxford.

If you please to call at Mr. Herring's when you go into the city, a sermon and speech are extremely at your service. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CLI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorpe, June 25, 1756.

Since bad news must be told, I think it an honest art, for the comfort of this chequered life, to convey it in as agreeable manner as may be, and mix it in some sort with pleasure. Your good brother** is paying a debt which, *serius*, *ocius*, is due from us all; but, I dare say, your kind presence contributes not a little to lighten his spirit, and sooth the cares of his family; and I thank you, when you told me a story that gave me real concern, that you blended entertainment with it. If the good man is still amongst us, my best wishes are with him; if he is mingled with the greater number, peace be to his manes; and I hope and believe

* Minister of Lynn-regis, canon residentiary of Salisbury, and author of a paraphrase on the Acts, Epistles, and Revelations. He died in 1757, aged 84. Sixty Sermons by him on plain and practical subjects, were published in two volumes octavo, in 1773. Mr. Whiston says, that "Dr Sydall, with Mr. Pyle, sen. of Lynn, "were the two best scholars that he ever ex- "amined for holy orders, while he was chaplain "to Dr. Moor, bishop of Norwich." Memoirs of his Life, p. 287.

† Ostend was taken, August 14, and, on December 4, Hannibal was at the gates—the Pretender was at Derby.

‡ Cape Breton.

§ Or "the Caudian Forks." The danger and disgrace of the Romans in those narrow passes may be seen in Livy, b. ix.

|| Preached at the cathedral-church of York, on occasion of the rebellion in Scotland, Sept. 22.

¶ On the same occasion, to the nobility, gentry, and clergy, at the castle of York, Sept. 24. This was the first alarm that was given to the nation, and will ever be remembered to his Grace's honour.

** John Duncombe, Esq. of Stocks, in Hertfordshire. He died June 30, 1746.

believe that he leaves a son behind him of a temper and disposition to imitate so good a father.

Your friend Bewley dined with me the other day. He told me your brother was still alive, by his last intelligence. I propose to be better acquainted with Mr. Bewley. He is a very agreeable man, and has the air and appearance of a very honest one. I pretend to some skill in faces. No way is infallible, but I am confident that is one way to the hearts of men. As I do not love to be idle, I have done a good deal here at my premises, and I have called in Mr. Bewley, who has a turn for it, to plan me a few more alterations. I hope what I have is now my own, to the end of my short lease; at least no northern irruptions are likely to shorten it. Old Lovat, the arch-rebel, is taken; and the chiefs are now suffering the just punishment of the most perfidious rebellion that ever men were guilty of. Their country is the picture of desolation; half the men slain; families perishing for want; houses and huts burnt; corn destroyed for forage; not a spire of grass; woods burnt to the ground, for the compass of twenty miles; and even their private fisheries all drained, to supply a devouring army. This is the state of the enemy-country, and surely no other than the effects of the justest vengeance; and yet there is a horror in the scene, which makes nature shrink back at the reflection. Praised be the goodness of God, for preserving to us the blessings of a just and gentle government? I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CLII.

Archbishop Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Dear Sir, Bishop-Thorp, Oct. 21, 1747.

I HAVE taken both your letters into my hands a great many times to answer, and been as often prevented. I never did, nor ever will forget my friends, certainly not such friends as yourself, whom I have known so long, and from whose correspondence I have received both pleasure and profit.

The Master of Bene't* made me a visit this summer, and I was extremely pleased to hear him speak with uncommon regard of your son, he does not speak lightly, and never insincerely.

We have had and still enjoy the finest season imaginable, which, with other reasons, would detain me longer here, but I am thinking of London, for the voice and countenance of every individual friend will at present have its use in the support of the King's government! Through the feeble help of treacherous allies, our neighbour-king is certainly too much for us, and, I think, we have nothing to do, but practise Phocion's policy, who advised his countrymen not to quarrel with Alexander, till they found they could beat him. I wish some of our great men could practise another piece of his policy, which was, to divert the arms of that *grand monarque*. But Phocion is a name of bad omen. He lived when the Grecian state was expiring.

Rutherforth's antagonist is a lady†, the wife of a clergyman in Northumberland; I cannot recollect her name. I am, dear Sir, your affectionate friend, &c.

LETTER CLIII.

Archbishop Herring to the Rev. Mr. Whiston.

Kensington,

Rev. Sir, January 28, 1747-8.

I THANK you most kindly for your good letter, and am better pleased with your Christian wishes for me, than with a hundred compliments I have received in picked and elegant phrases. Yours, I am sure come from a good heart and a sober judgment. I will do the best I can in this station, to which, indeed, I have been forced. And as neither pride, nor ambition, nor covetousness tempted me to desire it, so it is my daily prayer to God, that in the use and exercise of this great office, I may

* Mr. Castle.

† Mrs. Cockburn. Her works were afterwards published by Dr. Birch. The pamphlet to which the archbishop here alludes, is entitled, "Remarks on the principles and Reasonings of "Dr. Rutherforth's Essay on the Nature and "Obligation of Virtue."

keep

keep my heart and my hands free from those sad temptations. What you hint about the form of prayer, your age, and learning, and experience, give you a right to say; but it becomes them who have less of all those to be a little more reserved: the same form is come out by authority for this year. Many good men concur with you on the subject of the murrain*; and, I am afraid, in a little time, it will make the stoutest of us cry out for mercy, and reach those high places, which seem almost out of the reach of such calamities. Upon your hint, I looked over the forms of prayer, and find one for the 17th of January, 1703-4. This, I suppose, is what you mean, and I send you one of the prayers transcribed, I am, reverend Sir, your assured friend.

LETTER CLIV.

Archbishop Herring to the Rev. Dr. Benson.

Kensington,
Rev. Sir, February 2, 1747-8.

I CANNOT satisfy myself with having sent a cold and common answer of thanks, for your volume of most excellent and useful sermons. I do it in this manner with great esteem and cordiality. I thank you, at the same time, as becomes me to do, for your very obliging good wishes. The subject on which my friends congratulate me, is, in truth, matter of constant anxiety to me. I hope I have an honest intention, and, for the rest, I must rely on the good grace of God, and the counsel and assistance of my friends.

I think it happy, that I am called up to this high station, at a time when spite, and rancour, and narrowness of spirit are out of countenance; when we breathe the benign and comfortable air of liberty and toleration; and the teachers of our common religion make it their business to extend its essential influence, and join in supporting its true interest and honour. No times ever called more loudly upon protestants for zeal, and unity, and charity. I am, reverend Sir, your assured friend.

* In consequence, as it should seem, of Mr. Whilston's desire, a prayer was afterwards ordered on this account, being first read (as he observes) in Lyndon church, in Rutland, May 19. 1748.

LETTER CLV.

Archbishop Herring to W. Duncombe, Esq.

Dear Sir, Kensington, May 18, 1748.

AS you insist upon it, that the library at Lambeth shall be enriched by your very bountiful present‡. I accept it, with thanks, for myself and successors, and they shall be deposited with proper care and acknowledgment. Your letter was brought to me in company, and I understood your servant shot away like a ghost.

I shall always be glad to see you, and hope you will not defer your visits till I get to Lambeth.

Your son writes well, and I feel his agitations before his act. I remember, I never was more frightened than on the like occasion. I heard of the riot of these boys ‖ before. There is nothing in the business extremely tragical, but it is an instance how general a spirit of misrule is gone forth amongst us.

Poor D'Oyley's death I heard of the day after it happened. I remember his collection of books. I should be glad to see a catalogue of them, and possibly I might think of purchasing them§. I thank you for your ingenious sonnet, and am, dear Sir, your assured friend.

Pray see my picture at Hudson's. If you like it, I will order a copy, and sit once or twice, but, I protest, I am tired of that work.

LETTER CLVI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Lambeth, May 15, 1750.

BE assured that I want no remembrancer to serve you, or the very deserving young man your son. He shall not lose the fellowship at Bene't, through any failure in me to help him, and I know you will leave the manner of it to me.

‡ Rymer's Fœdera, 17 vols. folio.

‖ The under graduates at Cambridge, on the time and mode of the exercise performed by the bachelors of arts being altered.

§ They were purchased by Mr. Whiston, bookseller in Fleet-street.

I was the other day at your friend Mr. Richardson's*, to see a head of bishop Fleetwood, of his father's painting. He was very polite; and, on my asking whether he would part with it, he consented, and we soon agreed upon the terms†. I am, dear Sir, your assured friend.

LETTER CLVII.

Archbishop Herring to W. Duncombe, Esq.

Lambeth House,
Dear Sir, April 18, 1752.

As the author‡ chose to convey the inclosed‖ to me by your hands, I desire to return it to him the same way, but upon condition that you give him my sincerest thanks for the perusal of it. It has given me prodigious pleasure; and I have but one, or perhaps two reasons, for forbearing the strongest encomium. I wish to God, Lucretius had had so good a subject, and so much at his heart!

The author's intentions§ do me honour, and I am proud of being transmitted to posterity, as a friend to such doctrine, so explained and illuminated, Dear Sir, yours faithfully.

LETTER CLVIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon, June 25, 1752.

The country, I perceive, has a fine effect upon you, and it is well for you *rejuvenescere*; for I know, from more reasons than one, that you will be brought into no dangers, by a new spring in your constitution. I have reproached myself more than once for not fixing a time for a little expedition hither, as you had intimated an inclination in Mr. Browne to do me that favour, but indeed it was not in my power to do it; for the only day I had to spare, was claimed from me by a lady, on a long promise. I will hope for another opportunity, for there is a treasure in being acquainted with a man of such an heart and understanding as Mr. Browne.

I return you¶ Greene's very sensible letter. I have the best opinion of him, and a strong propensity, if I live, to be useful to the old house**. I am, dear Sir, your assured friend.

LETTER CLIX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon, July 1, 1753.

I am ashamed I have not answered your very kind and tender letter††, as I cannot plead disability for any time since I received it. My neglect has been owing to an attention to a course of life where my hours are set and marked out to particular purposes, or taken up by the visits of my friends. Blessed be God for it, I have mended in my health since my first arrival here, and continue to mend gradually. In so acute a disorder as mine was, it was not to be expected that I could jump into health, (jumping is too much for me) but I ought to be contented and thankful too, if I can walk leisurely into it. I have for some time regained my natural rest, eat as well as a man can do palled and fatigued with medicine, have no degree of a fever and little or no cough; but yet my lungs have not their proper tone, and mounting up stairs puts me a little to it.

I am sorry you have been so ill, and hope, when you favour me with another

* In Queen square.

† This picture the archbishop bequeathed, by his last will, to the late Earl of Hardwicke, his "ever honoured friend."

‡ Isaac Hawkins Browne, Esq. member of parliament for Wenlock, in Shropshire.

‖ A MS. copy of his Latin poem, *De animi immortalitate.*

§ Of inscribing it to his Grace.

¶ Then fellow of Bene't-college, afterwards minister of St. George's Tombland, &c. Norwich.

** His grace left to the college 1000l. in Old South Sea annuities.

†† Some weeks before the date of this letter, the archbishop was seized with a pleuritic fever, at Lambeth-house, which brought him to the brink of the grave; and by the great quantity of blood which he lost (fourscore ounces) his strength and spirits were so impaired, that though, on his retiring to Croydon, he did, in some measure, recover, yet, from that time he might rather be said to languish than to live; declining, as far as possible, all public business, and seeing little company but his relations and particular friends. Once, indeed, the late princess of Wales did him the honour of breakfasting with him, and was received and entertained with that unaffected ease and politeness, for which his Grace was so eminently distinguished.

letter

letter, to hear a better account of you. I had two physicians added to Dr. Wilmot, but yet the doctor lost no reputation with me, for I have a high opinion of him.

I will take care of Mrs. Wright's poems when I go to Lambeth. I am, &c.

LETTER CLX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon house, Nov. 5, 1753.

If I did not know you to be an honest man upon long experience, I should take you for a designing one. I return the inclosed*, without any observations upon it, but that the compliment you convey, comes from a man, who, it is very plain, does not know me. Excess of praise has generally as little foundation, as excess of calumny.

I thank you for informing me of the author of Rusticus †. That letter had the united approbation of the readers here.

The new edition of Tate and Brady is not come out, that I know of. The emendations suggested were much approved of, but my authority to alter them made a matter of some doubt; so the middle way was taken, of correcting the errors ‡, not the imperfections.

I bless God, I am easy, and much the more so, for abiding here. If a perfect cure is to be effected upon me, it must be done by air and exercise, caution as to what I eat, and quiet, the great balm of life.

Your friend, Dr. Carter §, is grievously teased by folks, who call themselves "the orthodox." I abhor every tendency to the Trinity controversy. The manner in which it is always managed, is the disgrace and ruin of Christianity. Your affectionate friend.

* From a noble earl, since deceased,

† A letter so signed in "The world," vol. i. numb. 36.

‡ In the edition of these Psalms, 1737, there were above two hundred errors of the press.

§ Minister of St. George's chapel, Deal, who had been presented, the year before, by one of the chapel-wardens, at the instigation, as it appeared, of the rector, for not reading the Athanasian creed. This gave rise to a controversy with that gentleman, which, as usual, was attended with much personal scandal.

LETTER CLXI.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon-house Nov. 25, 1753.

At last you will receive the very affecting and igenious poems of Mrs. Wright, which were laid up with such peculiar care, that I could neither find them myself, nor give directions to any one else where to look for them.

I have heard nothing of the edition of Tate, which, you said, you would leave for me at Lambeth. If there is time, it shall be made proper use of; and, I am sure, thanks are most justly due to you on that affair ‖.

I think I lent our friend Hawkins Browne the poems published by Lauder; and I think he has not returned them; ask, when you see him. That strange man§ has sent me another volume of select authors, as he terms it, *Miltono facem præducentium*. I have read Masenius's ¶ Sarcotis**, and I know it will please you. The sentiments are great, the versification very easy and harmonious, and I think the fiction very fine and poetical; so much so, that, were it not for the authority attached to a real divine story, as Milton treats it, I should doubt which method to prefer. If Milton ever read Masenius, he most certainly digested him.

I never read the letters you mention in your postscript; and, if you have them, I should like to receive them with the Psalms: I mean the archbishop of Bambray's, and Monsieur de la Motte's.

Gilbert West brought me some ingenious essays of Psalmanazar's, just published, on the difficult miracles in the Old Testament, by way of solution of them.

I wish this Jew bill was got well rid of (little better than the dispute about eating black puddings), and that the legislature would seriously set themselves to

‖ Mr. Duncombe's corrections above-mentioned (as appears from another letter, dated June 16, 1755), were sent by the archbishop to Mr. Richardson (king's printer), for a new edition of Tate's Psalms, then preparing.

§ Lauder.

¶ Professor of rhetoric and poetry, in the Jesuits college at Cologne, in the year 1650.

** The Incarnation.

stop those vices under which the nation bleeds. I was startled at an assertion in the Inspector* of yesterday, that more robberies and murders had been committed in the last seventeen weeks, than in the whole reign of queen Anne. I am, dear Sir, your assured friend.

LETTER CLXII.

Archbishop Herring to W. Duncombe Esq.

Dear Sir, Croydon-house, Jan. 25, 1756.

I THANK you for your entertainment of the 13th instant, and return you most heartily my best wishes for every thing to you, which is truly estimable. Your judgment is right. Whitefield is Daniel Burgess *redivivus*; and, to be sure, he finds his account in his joco-serious addresses. The other author ‡, in my opinion, with good parts and learning, is a most dark and saturnine creature. His pictures may frighten weak people, that, at the same time, are wicked, but, I fear, he will make few converts, except for a day. I have read his "Serious Thoughts ‡," but, for my own part, I think the rising and setting of the sun is a more durable argument for religion than all the extraordinary convulsions of nature put together. Let a man be good on right principles, and then, *impavidum ferient ruinæ*; so far, Horace was as good a preacher as any of us. For myself I own I have no constitution for these frights and fervours; and, if I can but keep up to the regular practice of a Christian life, upon Christian reasons, I shall be in no pain for futurity; nor do I think it an essential part of religion, to be pointed at for any foolish singularities.

The subjects you mention, of the methodist preaching, are excellent in the hands of wise men (not enthusiasts). Religion, for the practice of the world, must be plain and intellible to the lowest understanding. This is self-evident; and the gospel itself assures us, that "the "love of God is keeping his command-"ments:" and what need we farther evidence? As to their notion, that men are by nature devils, I can call it by no other name than wicked and blasphemous, and the highest reproach that man can throw upon his wise and good Creator. I am, dear Sir, your assured friend.

* By Dr. Hill.

‡ Mr. John Wesley.

‡ "On the earthquakes at Lisbon." If what the author had advanced in this pamphlet had been true, the earth, by the return of "the great "comet," (as he calls it) in 1758, would have been set on fire, and burnt to a coal; as he affirmed that the comet, in this revolution, would move not only in the same line, but in the same part of the line, in which the earth moves. This strange mistake arose from Mr. Wesley's confounding the comet of 1682, whose period is 75 years, with that of 1680, whose period is 575 years, and applying, *totidem verbis*, what Dr. Halley says of the latter, which will not appear till 2255, and whose trajectory will coincide with the earth's orbit, to the former, which did appear 1758, but never approached nearer to the ...dy of the earth than four millions of miles.

LETTER CLXIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon-house June 22, 1756.

YOU may be sure, if I had been in any good condition of health or spirits, you would not have been so long without thanks for your last kind letter. I continue extremely out of order; I think in a confirmed dropsy; and though, I am sure Dr. Wilmot has done all that art and friendship can do of me, I rather lose ground. I have now been near half a year in this dismal way, worse than the acutest pain, because of its duration: and every thing I take feeds the distemper, at the same time it prolongs life; for

> "Ready oft the port t' obtain,
> I'm shipwreck'd into life again."*

I know who sent me hither, and how much it is my duty to attend his summons for a removal; but life is over with me; and I sometimes, in my airings, repeat two pretty lines of Parnell,

> "But what are fields, or flow'rs, or air to me?
> Ah! tasteless all, if not enjoy'd with thee,
> O HEALTH!"

I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXIV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, Croydon-house, Jan. 3, 1757.*

I am very much obliged to you for a noble present,† and, I am sure, you will approve my disposal of it, for it went this morning, accompanied with a parcel of wine, to Colonel Canitz,‡ of the Hessians, who are quartered here. I would endeavour to have Croydon excepted out of the general reproach.§ They shall have every accommodation I can procure them.

Your obliged and assured friend.

LETTER CLXV.

Dr. Thomas Secker to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Rev. Sir, Gloucester, Nov. 18, 1711.

Before I give you an account of the state of our academy, and those other things you desired me, please to accept of my hearty thanks for that service you have done me, both in advising me to prosecute my studies in such an extraordinary place of education, and in procuring me admittance into it, I wish my improvements may be answerable to the advantages I enjoy; but however that may happen, your kindness has fixed me in a place where I may be very happy, and spend my time to good purpose: and where, if I do not, the fault will be all my own.

I am sensible how difficult it is to give a character of any person or thing, because the most probable guesses we make very often prove false ones. But, since you are pleased to desire it, I think myself obliged to give you the best and most impartial account of matters I can.

Mr. Jones then I take to be a man of real piety, great learning, and an agreeable temper; one who is very diligent in instructing all under his care, very well qualified to give instructions, and whose well-managed familiarity will always make him respected. He is very strict in keeping good orders, and will effectually preserve his pupils from negligence and immorality. And accordingly I believe there are not many academies freer in general from those vices than we are. In particular, my bedfellow Mr. Scott is one of unfeigned religion, and a diligent searcher after truth. His genteel carriage and agreeable disposition gain him the esteem of every one. Mr. Griffith is more than ordinary serious and grave, and improves more in every thing than one could expect from a man who seems to be not much under forty; particularly in Greek and Hebrew he has made a great progress. Mr. Francis‖ and Mr. Watkins are diligent in study, and truly religious. The elder Mr Jones, having had a better education than they, will in all probability make a greater scholar; and his brother is one of quick parts.

Our logic, which we have read once over, is so contrived as to comprehend all Heereboord, and the far greater part of Mr. Lock's Essay, and the Art of Thinking. What Mr. Jones dictated to us was but short, containing a clear and brief account of the matter, references to the places where it was more fully treated of, and remarks on, or explications of the authors cited, which need required. At our next lecture we gave an account both of what the author quoted and our tutor said, who commonly then gave us a larger explication of it, and so proceeded to the next thing in order. He took care, as far as possible, that we understood the sense as well as remembered

* Archbishop Herring died at Croydon-house on March 13 following, aged 64. "He was (says the Earl of Corke) what a bishop ought to be, and, as I doubt not, where all bishops ought to be. Honour and reverence will attend his name while this world lasts: happiness and glory will remain with his spirit for ever."

† A Yorkshire pye.

‡ His regiment was quartered at Croydon and Bromley.

§ No provision being made by law for quartering foreign troops, the Inn-keepers refused to lodge them, and they were obliged to build huts, and continue in camp till the 22d of December 1756, when a bill for quartering them, &c. having received the royal assent, their camp broke up, and they marched into quarters.

‖ Not improbably Mr. Henry Francis, for some time assistant in London to the Rev. Mr. John Foxon, and afterwards pastor of the church at Southampton.

the words of what we had read, and that we should not suffer ourselves to be cheated with obscure terms which had no meaning. Though he be no great admirer of the old logic, yet he has taken a great deal of pains both in explaining and correcting Heereboord, and has for the most part made him intelligible, or shewn that he is not so.

The two Mr. Jones's Mr. Francis, Mr. Watkins, Mr Sheldon, and two more gentlemen, are to begin Jewish antiquities in a short time. I was designed for one of their number, but rather chose to read logic once more; both because I was utterly unacquainted with it when I came to this place, and because the others having all, accept Mr. Francis, been at other academies, will be obliged to make more haste than those in a lower class, and consequently cannot have so good or large accounts of any thing, nor so much time to study every head. We shall have gone through our course in about four years time, which I believe nobody that once knows Mr. Jones will think too long.

I began to learn Hebrew as soon as I came hither, and find myself able now to construe, and give some grammatical account of about twenty verses in the easier parts of the Bible after less than an hour's preparation. We read every day two verses a-piece in the Hebrew Bible, which we turn into Greek (no one knowing which his verses shall be, though at first it was otherwise.) And this with logic is our morning's work.

Mr. Jones also began about three months ago some critical lectures in order to the exposition you advised him to. The principal things continued in them are about the antiquity of the Hebrew language, letters, vowels, the incorruption of the Scriptures, ancient divisions of the Bible, an account of the Talmud, Masora, and Cabala. We are at present upon the Septuagint, and shall proceed after that to the Targumim, and other versions, &c. Every part is managed with abundance of perspicuity, and seldom any material thing is omitted that other authors have said upon the point, though very frequently we have useful additions of things which are not to be found in them. We have scarce been upon any thing yet, but Mr. Jones has had those writers which are most valued on that head, to which he always refers us. This is what we first set about in the afternoon; which being finished, we read a chapter in the Greek Testament, and after that mathematics. We have gone through all that is commonly taught of algebra and proportion, with the six first books of Euclid, which is all Mr. Jones designs for the gentlemen I mentioned above, but he intends to read something more to the class that comes after them.

This is our daily employment, which in the morning takes up about two hours, and something more in the afternoon. Only on Wednesdays in the morning we read Dionysius's Periegesis, on which we have notes mostly geographical, but with some criticisms intermixed; and in the afternoon we have no lecture at all. So on Sunday in the afternoon we have only a thesis, which none but they who have done with logic have any concern in. We are also just beginning to read Isocrates and Terence, each twice a week. On the latter our tutor will give us some notes, which he received in a college from Perizonius.

We are obliged to rise at five of the clock every morning, and to speak Latin always, except when below stairs amongst the family. The people where we live are very civil, and the greatest inconvenience we suffer is, that we fill the house rather too much, being sixteen in number besides Mr. Jones, But I suppose the increase of his academy will oblige him to remove next spring. We pass our time very agreeably betwixt study and conversation with our tutor, who is always ready to discourse freely of any thing that is useful, and allows us either then or at lecture all imaginable liberty of making objections against his opinion, and prosecuting them as far as we can. In this and every thing else he shows himself so much a gentleman, and manifests so great an affection and tenderness for his pupils, as cannot but command respect and love. I almost forgot to mention our tutor's library, which is composed for the most part of foreign books, which seem to be very well chosen, and are every day of great advantage to us.

Thus I have endeavoured, Sir, to give you an account of all that I thought material or observable amongst us. As for my

my own part, I apply myself with what diligence I can to every thing which is the subject of our lectures, without preferring one subject before another; because I see nothing we are engaged in, but what is either necessary, or extremely useful for one who would thoroughly understand those things which most concern him, or be able to explain them well to others. I hope, I have not spent my time, since I came to this place, without some small improvement both in human knowledge, and that which is far better; and I earnestly desire the benefit of your prayers, that God would be pleased to fit me better for his service both in this world and the next. This, if you please to afford me, and your advice with relation to study, or whatever else you think convenient, must needs be extremely useful, as well as agreeable, and shall be thankfully received by your most obliged humble servant.*

LETTER CLXVI.

Dr. Thomas Secker to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Cuddesden, near Oxford,
Sir, June 19, 1741.

I AM extremely obliged to you for the agreeable present of your book,† which is peculiarly well adapted for the direction and improvement of students in the university, where your Logic is by no means the only piece of yours that is read with high esteem. You have been a diligent promoter of useful and especially religious knowledge, of Christian faith and Christian morals. On these accounts I have always respected you from the time that I had so many years ago the advantage of your conversation, and always rejoiced in the just honour that has been universally paid you; and, as this opportunity of expressing my regard gives me much pleasure, so, if the favour of letting me see you next winter will not be inconvenient to you, it will be a great satisfaction to, Sir, your affectionate humble servant.

* This very sensible letter was written by Mr. (afterwards Archbishop) Secker at the early age of eighteen. It does honour to himself at the same time it pays such distinguished and deserved respect to his learned, vigilant, and amiable tutor, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Jones.

† Dr. Watts's Improvement of the Mind, or a Supplement to the Art of Logic.

LETTER CLXVII.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Cuddesden, Sept. 14, 1743.

I HEARTILY thank you for your obliging letter, and, had I known that you had printed a sermon on the subject‡, I should not have failed to enrich my own from it. I hope the things I have said in favour of our charity-schools are true. I hope the Christians of this nation in general are grown much milder towards each other, and I am sure we have great need to gain in this virtue what we lose in others, and become a more united body as we become a smaller, which I apprehend we do. But, fear not, little flock. May God direct and bless us all in our poor endeavours to serve him! May he give you every needful support under your long sickness, and restore you speedily to your former usefulness, if it be his holy will! I am, with great esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXVIII.

From the same to the same.

St. James's, Westminster,
Sir, March 20, 1744-5.

I HEARTILY thank God that he hath restored you to a better state of health, and should not have permitted your letter, which brought me that good news, to continue unanswered so long, if more than ordinary business had not sometimes put it out of my power, and sometimes out of my thoughts, to make you my acknowledgements for it. The civilities for which you thank me are no more than a very imperfect return of justice for the great services you have done to religion; and you have made a valuable addition to them in the book|| you have now been pleased to send me; particularly by what you have written in so strong and awful, yet so compassionate and good-natured a manner, in defence of the scripture-doctrine concerning the duration of future punishments. I pray God to continue you long in a capacity of being still farther useful, and am, with great regard, Sir, your, &c.

‡ Dr. Watts's Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity-schools.

|| Dr. Watts's Discourses on the World to come.

LETTER CLXIX.

Dr. Josiah Hort, Archbishop of Tuam, to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Reverend Sir, Dublin, Dec. 15. 1743.

I AM brought into the circumstance of an insolvent debtor, who is afraid to see the face of his creditor; and yet it is not through idleness or disregard that I remain so long in my friend's debt for his kind letter of the last summer; but I am really oppressed with letter-writing, and business of various kinds; some of my own, but more of other persons; some private, but more public, both ecclesiastical and secular, which are incident to my station.

However, I have at last found a spare hour for thanking you for the present of your book, which ought more properly to be done by my wife, who presently laid hands upon it, and took it into her own library. She is much taken with the vein of piety, which breathes in your works, and buys them up.

I am truly concerned for your *insomnia*, which I suppose proceeds from weak nerves. If you could ride an easy pad, increasing your journey every day from one to four or five miles, as your strength would permit, I should hope for some good effect, as the lassitude occasioned by that exercise would incline you more naturally to rest than the use of drugs.

I bless God, I enjoy good health, which enables me to go through much business; but I have for many years been going down the hill, and, if the doctrine of gravitation takes place in the life of man, the motion must accelerate as I come nearer the bottom. Your case is the same, though more aggravated by distempers. God grant we may be useful while we live, and may run clear, and with unclouded minds till we come to the very dregs!

I send you my visitation charge to my clergy of Tuam. The former part is a copy of my charge to the clergy of Kilmore and Ardagh, which being of general use, I saw no occasion to change. The latter part is new, and I submit it to your judgment. I am, dear, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXX.

Dr. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Good Sir, Whitehall, March 7, 1732-3.

I THANK you heartily for your late kind present,* but as the course of my life has led me into studies of another kind, I am sensible I cannot profit so much by it, as others will do, whose thoughts have been more employed in that way. It is certainly a very laudable exercise of the mind, especially as you apply it throughout to the good of religion; and what you have published will, I doubt not, be of great use to the growing generation, by leading them into a just way of thinking and reasoning. One thing I wonder at, and that is, how a mind that thinks so closely, can at the same time frame itself to that easy and familiar way which appears in some of your other writings. I commend you and your labours to the divine care and direction, and remain, with great truth, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXI.

From the same to the same.

Good Sir, Whitehall, Jan. 22, 1734-5.

SINCE I received the favour of your present, it has become part of my Sunday's exercise, and I have now read it over with pleasure, and I hope not without profit. The new notion that has prevailed among us of late years, that the Christian religion is little more than a good system of morality, must in course draw on a disregard to spiritual exercises, which calls on all serious Christians to do all that is in their power to raise and keep alive a spirit of devotion and piety in this lukewarm and degenerated age. I pray God to give a blessing to your labours in that way, and remain, with great respect, Sir, your, &c.

* Not improbably the Doctor's Treatise on Logic, or the Right Use of Reason.

LETTER CLXXII.

From the same to the same.

Good Sir, Whitehall, Jan. 19, 1735-6.

I THANK you very heartily for the book* I lately received, and which I have read with great satifaction and delight. The seeing so shameful a departure from true christianity on the two points which are the subject of your book, has long been a sensible concern and grief to me, and especially when I see it countenanced and propagated by many who call themselves christians, but are in reality little more than deists; for if the great work of our redemption, and the blessed fruits of it are to be laid aside, I cannot see that the name of christian signifies much. You have set this matter in so clear a light, and worked up the whole in so agreeable a manner, that I hope, by the blessing of God, it will have great effect; and it would have had greater, if you had set your name to it. To deal clearly with you, I have thought for some time that those doctrines, and others of the same kind, have received a grievous wound from the indifference about them (to say no worse) which some dissenting ministers have discovered of late; and the wound is the deeper, because hitherto the dissenters were, without exception, zealous for them, and the present manifest abatement of that zeal in some of their leading men, will be reckoned an evidence of their present conviction, that their doctrines are either false, or at least of small moment. Forgive me if I add, that I think due care has not yet been taken to satisfy the world that, notwithstanding the defection of some dissenters, there are many among them, and those of great note, who are not in the least tainted with modern notions, but adhere stedfastly to the true doctrines of the gospel, as delivered to us by Christ and his apostles. I am, with great truth and esteem, Sir, your, &c.

* Undoubtedly Dr. Watts's Redeemer and Sanctifier.

LETTER CLXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Good Sir, Whitehall, April 23, 1737.

I HAVE perused your Discourse upon Humility† with much satisfaction, and I hope, with profit to myself; if not, I am sure it is my own fault. There was no occasion to make the apology for descending to the lowest scenes of life. It is a fault both in preaching and writing upon practical subjects, when we keep too much to general reasoning, and do not bring down our doctrines to common life, which are best remembered, and take the fastest hold upon the mind and consciences of our hearers and readers.

I wish you a full enjoyment of health, that you may be able to proceed in your good designs for the benefit of religion; and am, with great truth and esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Good Sir, Fulham, June 6, 1741.

I AM much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me, and particularly for the late present of your book‡. It found me engaged in a particular business that has been upon my hands some time, so that I have not yet been at leisure to peruse it. But I have seen enough to satisfy me of the serviceableness of it towards replenishing the mind with useful knowledge and true wisdom, and how well the rules laid down for that end are calculated for the general improvement of all, whether learned or unlearned, who will attend to them, and be conducted by them. But while you are teaching others how to employ their thoughts wisely and usefully, you must be so just to yourself, as not to stretch your own beyond your strength, but to take the warning which age and infirmities give us, to slacken and moderate our pace. Under this restraint I heartily wish you a successful progress in your

† Dr. Watts's Discourse on Humility represented in the character of St Paul.

‡ Dr. Watts's improvement of the Mind, or a Supplement to the Art of Logic.

further

further designs for the service of religion, and remain with great truth and esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXV.

Dr. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Good Sir, Fulham, July 12, 1742.

I DESIRE you to accept my hearty thanks for your kind and valuable present*, which was part of my employment yesterday; and this day I am setting out on my visitation of Essex and Hertfordshire. It is written with great clearness and strength, and whoever peruses and attends to it will find much light from it in reading several of the epistles of St. Paul. I am glad to find that you have no difficulty in making him the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews (which I took some pains to clear in my third pastoral letter), and that you carry on the gradual opening of the gospel-dispensation by him, and the other apostles, to the times after our Saviour's ascension.

The method you take of reducing the matter to be treated of into chapters and paragraphs of no great length, keeps every thing clear and distinct, and I wish it were observed by all other writers.

As I take it for granted you have by you other discourses unpublished, I hope God will give you health and strength to revise them if needful, and then to publish them for the service of religion, which is the sincere wish of, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Good Sir, Whitehall March 2, 1744-5.

I SEND this with my sincere thanks for the valuable present†, which I have lately received from you. I have already perused part f it, and find much satisfaction in observing the true spirit of piety and zealous concern for souls which appear in every page. God knows the present degeneracy and lukewarmness among christians stand in great need of such awakenings as to their future state; and as it is the duty of us all, in our several stations, to use our best endeavours for that end, so I heartily wish and pray that you in particular, who have it so greatly at heart, may be blessed with health and strength to pursue and perfect all your designs in that way, I am, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXVII.

Frances Countess of Hartford, afterwards Duchess of Somerset ‡, to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Sir, Grosvenor-Street, Feb 23, 1729-30.

I COULD not have been so long without making any acknowledgments for the favour of your excellent and obliging letter, had not my Lord Hartford's illness in a long and severe fit of the gout confined me to a continual attendance in his chamber. He is now, I thank God, on the recovery, though not yet able to walk without the help of crutches.

Our human state is indeed liable to many inconveniences: we are loaded with bodily infirmities, and tormented with passions; but a few circling years will clear the prospect, and we shall, through the grace of God, be relieved from all the pains and sorrows which vex us here. My health has been very uncertain all this winter; at the beginning of it a violent rheumatism confined me to my bed and chamber for some weeks, and I am at present very much disordered by a very severe cold, which has lasted me more than a fortnight, and is rather worse than it was at first. My Lord and

* Supposed to be Dr. Watts's Harmony of all the Religions which God ever prescribed.

† Very probably the Doctor's "Discourses "on the World to come."

‡ This lady was the daughter of the Honourable Mr. Thynne, brother to the Lord Viscount Weymouth. She married Algernon, Earl of Hartford, son of Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, who succeeded to the honour and estate of his father on his demise, December the 2d, 1748, by which event she became Duchess of Somerset. His grace her husband, died Feb. 9 1750, and she survived him only till July 7, 1754, leaving an only daughter married to Sir Hugh Smithson, Baronet, who succeeded his father-in-law as Earl of Northumberland, while Sir Edward Seymour, Baronet, succeeded him as Duke of Somerset. Her Grace appears to have been a truly pious, amiable and accomplished lady.

my

my daughter assure you of their sincerest regards. I am truly concerned to hear you have been so ill, but I hope you will enjoy a more confirmed state of health for the future, that you may pass your pilgrimage here with as little uneasiness as mortality will admit of.

Governor Shute brought me your picture, which I shall always set an high value upon, as I shall do on every thing that reminds me of so worthy a friend.

I will not trouble you any longer at present than to beg to be remembered in your prayers, that I may lead a life of holiness for the few remaining years that may yet be left me. I am, with a sincere friendship, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Marlborough, Aug 3, 1731.

I HOPE you have before this time heard that Mrs. Rowe has received your book, which I took care to have safely delivered to her. I assure you it has been my companion in many of my evening walks, and the moderation with which you treat our way of worship ought, in my opinion, to engage the leading people of our church to judge with equal candour of yours, and then methinks there would be little cause for separation, since we all acknowledge one Shepherd. The summer is almost past, and we have seen very little of it, since I think we have scarce been able to leave off fires for above three days together. I have a cough which still hangs upon me, but I hope air and exercise, with the blessing of God, will soon remove it. I am, with a very sincere esteem, Sir, your, &c.

My Lord and my young people send their services to you. I assure you, my little boy is grown a great proficient in your Songs for children, and sings them with great pleasure.

LETTER CLXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Grosvenor-street, Feb. 9, 1734.

THE fresh proof of friendship you design to give me* is as agreeable to me as it must be to receive any instance of kindness and approbation from those we sincerely esteem. Since you allow me to object to any thing in the dedication, I will trespass so far upon your good nature as to beg you will leave out whatever may imply my attempting to write poetry; but if there be any among the things you have of mine which you think worth placing among yours, I shall have just cause to be pleased at seeing them come abroad in such company, if you will have the goodness to conceal my name either under that of Eusebia, or A Friend†; a title which I shall think myself happy to deserve. My Lord and the children assure you of their services and kind wishes; and I am, with great truth and regard, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXX.

From the same to the same.

Sir, April 8, 1734.

I HAVE received the book to which you had the partiality to prefix my name ‡. This public mark of your friendship, and the kind opinion you express of me, would be in danger of giving me a self-satisfaction which I have no title to, if a crowd of frailties and defects, which are too frequently reminding how far I am from meriting your esteem, did not hinder me from giving way to a complacence which would be criminal unless my life were more perfect.

I have gone almost half through the book, from which I have received the

* That of the Doctor's dedication of his Miscellanies in Prose and Verse to her ladyship.

† No doubt therefore can be made but the four poetical pieces, entitled "A rural Meditation, A Penitential Thought, A midnight "Hymn, and the Dying Christian's Hope," inserted in the sixty-third number of his Miscellanies, attributed to Eusebia, and inscribed to Philomela, a name by which Mrs. Rowe, her ladyship's intimate friend, was distinguished, are the compositions of her ladyship.

‡ The Doctor's Miscellanies.

pleasure

pleasure which your writings never fail to give me, a pleasure attended by profit and reason. I am, Sir, with the truest friendship, your, &c.

My Lord and our young people send services to you.

LETTER CLXXXI.

Frances Countess of Hartford, afterwards Duchess of Somerset, to Dr. Isaac Watts.*

Sir,

I AM extremely concerned that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you on Thursday, since I think it very long since I had that satisfaction, which I assure you I wish for much oftener than I enjoy, but it is my lot at present to be in waiting†; and besides, my lord has been laid up, and still is so, with a most severe fit of the gout; so that what time I can spare from my attendance on the Queen is passed by his bed's side. If he is able to be lifted into the coach he talks of leaving London next week. We have had an unpleasant winter, for betwixt illness and accidents there has scarce been a week in which the whole family was well enough to go out. I have for my own particular suffered extremely, first from an intermitting fever, which lasted a long time, and since that from a bruise I got on horse-back by a waggon which crushed my stirrup-leg in so sad a manner, that though it is more than seven weeks ago, I have still great trouble with it. My lord and my young people assure you of their hearty compliments. I hope you will be so good as to remember me in your prayers, and believe me, as I am with great truth and esteem, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXII.

From the same to the same.

Sir, April 13, 1775.

I WOULD sooner have thanked you for the favour of your letter, and the book which I received just after, but delayed it till I could get time to finish the inclosed lines, which I began soon after Mrs. Rowe's death‡, but had not leisure to proceed with them till after my Lord's return to London, whither he and my daughter went last week. He was taken, while he was here§, with a violent pain in the stomach and bowels, which, whether it were gout or colic, reduced him very low, and alarmed me extremely; but I bless God, he is now in perfect health again, and I hear has recovered his good looks entirely. I am myself much better than I was in the winter, bating a shortnesss of breath, which makes them judge my continuance in the country absolutely necessary. I must now thank you for your excellent discourse on Humility, which I have read with great pleasure, and I hope I shall receive profit from the just manner in which you have treated so useful a subject. I must also repeat my gratitude for your book "On the strength and Weak-"ness of Human Reason." I never read any thing more entertaining and instructive. I should be very happy if I could flatter myself that I had goodness enough to make my life as useful as the benevolence and charity of your temper incline you to think it may. I beg the favour of you not to give any copy of the inclosed verses, for I would wish my excursions of this kind to be a secret from every body but you, and a friend or two more, who know that I do not aim at the character of a genius by any attempts of this nature, but am led to them merely to amuse a leisure hour, and speak the sentiments of my heart. I have no company at present but my son, his tutor being gone to London about business, but I do not mention this as a mortification. I am afraid the decline of years, and the languishing state of health I have laboured under for some time, make it rather necessary for me to endeavour to find arguments to reconcile myself to the variety of company to which my station and the occupation I am attached to in a court require me to accommodate myself. I am, Sir, your, &c.

* There is no date to this letter, but Doctor Watts has written on the back of it, April 1735.

† Lady of the bed-chamber to Queen Caroline.

‡ Verses on Mrs. Rowe's death.

§ Supposed at Marlborough.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Hermitage on St. Leonard's Hill,
Sir, May 2, 1737.

I RETURN you many thanks for the Epigram* you were so good as to send me, and should think myself very happy if any thing of mine could deserve to shew the joy I should feel in being able to imitate Mrs. Rowe in the smallest instance. I have only two meditations of hers, which she gave me with the strongest injunctions not to let any body see them, lest they should be thought too rapturous; but as I conclude she would not have included you among those from whom she meant they should be concealed, I will have them copied, if you desire it,

I thank God all my family, except myself, are in perfect health, and I am myself much better than in the winter, only that I have still a shortness of breath, which makes walking up stairs, or any ascent, very painful to me; but as I have a better appetite, I have recovered some of my flesh, and a little of my natural colour. My Lord and Betty are in London, so that my son and his governor are my only companions at present; but we pass our time agreeably enough between reading, walking, and such other amusements as the place in which we are, and the season of the year afford us. We have been lately reading Leonidas, in which I think there are many fine thoughts, but I hear the town are much divided in their sentiments about it, since one part of them are for preferring it to Milton, and others for levelling it to the lowest rank of poetry. I confess neither of these appear to me a just representation of it. If you have read it, I shall be glad to know your thoughts of it.

I own I find a pleasure in thinking that I perceive dawnings of an honest heart and tolerable reasoning in Lord Beauchamp, and his governor; and I flatter ourselves that we see a clearness of judgment and distinctness of ideas in the themes he composes, which are infinitely the favourite part of his studies, and always performed with good humour, though he is obliged to write them in three languages, English, Latin, and French. He is by no means good at getting things by heart, for which reason Mr. Dalton is very favourable in his impositions of that kind, which he seldom gives him, and in small quantities. Now I have said so much of my son, I should be unjust to his sister if I did not tell you that I have the happiness to see her a very good-natured, sensible young woman, with a sincere sense of religion and virtue, and the same observance from affection to my Lord and me, at almost one and twenty years old, that she had in her earliest childhood. You see, Sir, I take the privilege of a friend, and flatter myself that you will not be tired with a detail of my family comforts, for the enjoyment of which I hope I am thankful as I ought to be, and most particularly so that my Lord is so entirely recovered as to allow me to hope his children will long have the blessing of the tenderest father, and myself of the best husband I ever saw. You will forgive the length of this letter, and believe me, with the truest esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Marlborough, July 13, 1737.

NOTHING but my own very bad state of health, and the confinement I have had with my Lord, who is just recovering from a severe fit of the gout, should so long have hindered me from acknowledging the receipt of your letter, and the papers inclosed with it, particularly the letter which you were so good as to design to prefix to Mrs. Rowe's Meditations. I can with the strictest truth affirm, that I do not know any distinction

* This epigram is to be met with in the sixth Number of the Doctor's Miscellanies, entitled. "Remnants of Time employed in Prose and "Verse," published after his decease, and it is thus introduced:

On an Elegy written by the Right Honourable the Countess of Hartford on the death of Mrs. Rowe, 1737.

Struck with the sight of Philomela's urn
Eusebia weeps, and calls her muse to mourn,
While from her lips the tuneful sorrows fell,
The groves confess a rising Philomel.

tion upon earth that I could feel a truer pleasure in receiving, were I deserving of it; but, as I am forced to see how much I fall below the idea which the benevolence of your nature has formed of me, it teaches me to humble myself by that very incident which might administer a laudable pride to a more worthy person. If I am constrained to acknowledge this mortifying truth, you may believe there are many people in the world who look upon me with more impartial eyes than self-love will allow me to do; and others, who perhaps think I enjoy more of this world's goods than I either merit, or than falls to the common lot, look at me with envious and malignant views, and are glad of every opportunity to debase me, or those who they believe entertain a favourable opinion of me. I would hope that I have never done any thing, wilfully I am sure I have not, to raise any such sentiments in the breast of the meanest person upon earth, but yet experience has convinced me that I have not been happy enough to escape them. For these reasons, Sir, I must deny myself the pleasure and the pride I should have in so public a mark of your friendship and candour, and beg that, if you will design me the honour of joining any address to me with those valuable remains of Mrs. Rowe, that you will either retrench the favourable expressions you intended to insert, or else give me no other title at the top of it than that of a friend of yours and hers, an appellation which, in the sincerity of my soul, I am prouder of, than I could be of the most pompous name that human grandeur can lay claim to. My Lord and his children desire me to assure you of their service and best wishes. I inclose you a copy of the letter which Mrs. Rowe left for me*, and am glad of every opportunity to repeat that I am, with the greatest esteem, Sir, your, &c.

* The following is an exact copy of Mrs. Rowe's letter, transcribed from Lady Hartford's own hand writing;

To the Right Honourable the Countess of Hartford.

Madam,

This is the last letter you will ever receive from me, the last assurance I shall give you on earth of a sincere and stedfast friendship; but, when we meet again, I hope it will be in the heights of immortal love and ecstacy. Mine perhaps may be the first glad spirit to congratulate your safe arrival on the happy shores. Heaven can witness how sincere my concern for your happiness is. Thither I have sent my ardent wishes that you may be so secured from the flattering delusion of the world, and, after your pious example has been long a blessing to mankind, may you calmly resign your breath and enter the confines of unmolested joy!

I am now taking my farewel of you here, but it is a short adieu, for I die with full persuasion that we shall meet again.—But, O, in what elevation of happiness! in what enlargement of mind, and perfection of every faculty! What transporting reflections shall we make on the advantages of which we shall feel ourselves eternally possest!

To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, we shall ascribe immortal glory, dominion, and praise for ever. This is all my salvation, and all my hope. That name in whom the gentiles trust, in whom all the families on earth are blessed, is now my glorious, my unfailing confidence; in his merits alone I expect to stand justified before infinite purity and justice. How poor were my hopes if I depended on those works, which my own vanity, or the partiality of men, have called good, and which, if examined by Divine purity, would prove perhaps but specious sins? The best actions of my life would be found defective, if brought to the test of that unblemished holiness in whose sight the heavens are not clean.—Where were my hopes but for a Redeemer's merits and atonement.—How desperate, how undone my condition?—With the utmost advantage I can boast I should start back and tremble at the thoughts of appearing before the unblemished Majesty.—O Jesus, what harmony dwells in thy name!—Celestial joy and immortal life are in the sound.—Let angels set thee to their golden harps; let the ransomed nations for ever magnify thee!

What a dream is mortal life;—What shadows are the objects of sense! All the glories of mortality, my much-beloved friend, will be nothing in your view at the awful hour of death, when you must be separated from the whole creation, and enter on the borders of the immaterial world.

Something persuades me that this will be my last farewel in this world. Heaven forbid that it should be an everlasting parting. May that Divine protection, whose care I implore, keep you stedfast in the faith of christianity, and guide your steps in the strictest paths of virtue! Adieu, my most dear friend, till we meet in the paradise of God. ELIZABETH ROWE.

LETTER CLXXXV.

Frances Countess of Hartford, afterwards Duchess of Somerset, to Dr. I. Watts.

Sir, Marlborough, Aug. 17, 1736.

THE sincere esteem I have for you, makes it very difficult for me to oppose any thing you desire†, and it is doubly so in an instance where I might have an opportunity of indulging so justi-

† That the Doctor might address Mrs. Rowe's Devout Exercises to her Ladyship by name.

liable

liable a pride as I should feel in letting the public see this fresh mark of your partiality to me: but as I am apprehensive that the envy such a distinction would raise against me might draw some vexation with it, I hope you will have the goodness to change the dedication into a letter to a friend, without giving me any other appellation.

I have been so ill as to keep my chamber, and almost my bed, since I received the first of your letters, and my Lord has had a return of the gout. Nothing else should have made me so long delay owning the receipt of it, and assuring you that I am, with the greatest esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

From the same to the same.

Sir, October 27, 1737.

I SHOULD sooner have thanked you for Mrs. Rowe's Meditations, which you were so good as to send me, but that I had a mind to read them carefully over first. You have in your preface taken the kindest and most judicious care to excuse some expressions in them which I must confess appear to me to stand in need of some apology, but upon the whole I think there are several excellent sentiments in them, which I think cannot fail of doing good, especially to those who by their acquaintance with her, know how sincerely they came from her heart. Lady Betty returns her thanks for the book you sent her, and says she shall always value it as being written by Mrs. Rowe, and as a mark of your kind regard to herself. I have many acknowledgments to make you for the honour you have done me in your dedication*, which by your kindness in suppressing my name, gives me an unmixed pleasure, by affording me the satisfaction of receiving such a mark of your partiality without the hazard of raising the public envy.

My Lord and my son present their services to you, and I am, with the sincerest gratitude and esteem, Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVII.

From the same to the same.

Sir, St. Leonards-Hill, June 6, 1738.

I HAD the pleasure on Saturday to receive the book†, and the kind letter you were so good as to send me. I dare say I shall go through the book with a great deal of pleasure; I have already read part of it, and find nothing as yet to give me any apprehensions that I shall find it dry or unpleasant. I am sure the subject is of importance, and is rendered most particularly so at this time, when the polite part of the world look on the Sabbath as an old-fashioned institution, from which they would gladly be released. I inclose you some verses which, though perhaps not strictly right as to the rules of poetry, I believe you will excuse for the piety of the sentiments. They were sent me by a friend of mine who lives at Gloucester, and she says were written by a young gentleman there.

I thought it very long since I had heard from you, and should without ceremony have written again, but I have laboured under a very painful disorder in my head and face, which has of late made writing very difficult to me. I thank God it is now a little better, though so far from well as to hinder me of the pleasures of riding and walking, to which the season of the year would naturally invite me, and which are generally more beneficial to my health than any medicine in the dispensary. But I ought not to repine at these little inconveniences, which are so far less afflicting than I deserve, while I have the blessing to see my Lord and my children enjoy a perfect state of health; for though I doubt I must never hope to see my Lord able to walk again, he is otherwise in as good health and spirits as ever he was since I knew him. He and my daughter are this day gone to London to stay till Thursday or Friday, but my son and I remain here. They all assure

* This declaration of her Ladyship, and what she says in the two foregoing letters, make it evident to whom the Doctor inscribed Mrs. Rowe's Meditations, though the name is concealed in the dedication. The whole of it agrees to her Ladyship, and shews what a high opinion and esteem he entertained concerning her.

† Undoubtedly his Discourses on the Holiness of Times, Places, and People; published, in 1738.

you of their best wishes. It is comfortable to find that there are still enough of such well-disposed minds as to encourage Mrs. Rowe's Meditations, which certainly breathe as sincere a spirit of piety as can be met with in any writing. I am afraid I have tired you with this long letter, and indeed the pain of my eyes reminds me that it is time to conclude it, by assuring you that I am, with the greatest esteem, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

Frances Countess of Hartford, afterwards Dutchess of Somerset, to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Sir, St. Leonard's Hill, Aug. 8, 1738.

I would much sooner have thanked you for the favour of your last letter, but have been hindered by my attendance on my Lord in a severe fit of the gout, though, I thank God, it has been only in his limbs, and not affected either his head or stomach.

I think every body must wish a muse like Mr. Pope's were more inclined to exert itself on divine and good-natured subjects; but I am afraid satire is his highest talent; for I think his Universal Prayer is by no means equal to some other of his works; and I think his tenth stanza* an instance how blind the wisest men may be to the errors of their own hearts; for he certainly did not mean to imprecate such a proportion of vengeance on himself, as he is too apt to load those with whom he dislikes; nor would he wish to have his own failings exposed to the eye of the world with all the invective and ridicule, with which he publishes those of his fellow-creatures.

I have lately met with some riddles which we think pretty enough in their way, and, as I remember you once told me you thought them tolerable amusements, I will inclose you one or two of them, and, if they do not displease you, can furnish you with a few more, which we do not think bad ones. My Lord and our young people assure you of their services. I am, Sir, with the sincerest esteem, your, &c.

* Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Jan. 17, 1739.

I am truly sorry to find you complain of any decay, but I am sure if you have any it must be bodily, and has no other effect than that, which both Mr. Waller and yourself have so happily described as letting in light upon the soul.

I never read any thing in my life that pleased me better than your meditations on Revelation 10th, and I hope I shall not only delight in reading the words, but lay the substance of it to my heart, to which end allow me to beg your prayers as an assistance.

My dear Lord's state of suffering (for he is again confined to his bed by the gout) gives me little opportunity and less inclination to lose much time in the gay amusements which are apt to divert other people from the thoughts of their dissolution; but I am not sure that a life of care and anxiety has not as bad an effect, by fixing the mind too attentively on the present gloom, which obscures every cheerful ray which would otherwise enliven one's spirits.

I wish I had any thing to send more worth your reading than the following verses; but I have so little leisure that I can scarce get time to write letters to the few friends I correspond with. These lines were written one morning in October as I was sitting in a bow-window in my chamber at St. Leonard's Hill, which looks on a little grove in the garden, and beyond has an extensive view of the forest.

How lately was yon russet grove
The seat of harmony and love?
How beauteous all the sylvan scene?
The flowers how gay, the trees how green? &c.

I am importuned by a very valuable old woman, who is declining apace, to beg your prayers. She took me from my nurse, and, if I have any good in me, I owe it to her. She was trusted by my mother with the care both of my sister and myself, and has lived with me ever since. But now, though past 70,

she cannot meet death without terror, and yet I believe I may venture to answer, that she has always lived under the strictest sense of religion, but lowness of spirits joined to many bodily infirmities will shed darkness on the most cheerful minds, and hers never was of that cast. I fear she has very few months (if weeks) to come on earth, and a notice that you will grant her request would make her I believe pass them with more comfort.

I am forced to take another page to assure you of my Lord's compliments, and those of my young people; the two latter are very well. I have no other view in sending the above verses, but to prove that my confidence in your friendship has received no alteration from the length of time which has passed since I had an opportunity of assuring you in person with how true a regard I am, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXC.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Windsor-Forest, May 19, 1739.

I would sooner have expressed my concern for your illness had I been free from complaint myself. I have been afflicted for some weeks with a pain in my jaws and face, which is yet very little better, and really disheartens me from doing any thing. My Lord and Betty are in town, as is my son's governor on account of a violent rheumatism, so that he, and I, and a young gentleman three or four years older than himself, live here in perfect solitude. Our amusement within doors is at present Rapin's History of England in English, which they abridge as they go along; I work or draw while they read aloud, and we do not seem tired of our way of life.

Your good prayers for poor Rothery have met with unexpected success. She is so much recovered that I begin to think she will get entirely well, and if she does, I think nothing of that kind has, since I can remember, looked more like a miraculous operation of the healing power of the Almighty.

I hope the same divine mercy will long preserve you a blessing to the age, and that you will find your strength return with the warm weather.

My son assures you of his kindest wishes and services, and I am sure the other branches of my family would do the same if they were here.

I hoped every week (of late) for the publication of the sermons you were so good as to say you intended me. I find Mr. Grove's are going to be published by subscription. I have sent to town to desire that my name may be added to the list.

I have just had the oddest pamphlet sent me which I ever saw in my life, called *Amusemens Philosophiques sur de language des Betes*. It was burnt by the hands of the common executioner at Paris, and the priest who wrote it banished till he made a formal retraction of it, and yet I think it very plain by the style that the man was either in jest or crazed. It is by no means wanting of wit, but extremely far from a system of probability. I will now only recommend myself to your prayers, and subscribe myself, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCI.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Marlborough, June 7, 1739.

You will have great reason to think me very ungrateful for your kind present to my son, and very indifferent in regard to your health, till I have told you what has so long hindered my returning you thanks for the one, and assuring you of my concern for the other. I have been since I received yours afflicted with a pain in my head, which was almost ready to deprive me of my eyesight. It lasted four or five days, and, as soon as it was over, we prepared to remove hither, where we have only been three days. These have been the impediments which have kept me silent at a time when I had the strongest inclination to inquire after you, and assure you of my sincerest wishes and prayers for your perfect recovery.

I have the pleasure of finding my garden extremely improved in the two years I have been absent from it. Some little alterations I had ordered are completed. The trees which I left small ones are grown to form an agreeable shade, and I have reason to bless God for the pleasantness of the place which is allotted me

to pass many of my retired hours in. May I make use of them to fit me for my last, and that I may do so allow me to beg the continuation of your prayers!

My poor old woman is got hither, contrary to her own, and all our expectations. She has the deepest gratitude for your goodness to her, and begs you will accept her thanks. She is still very weak, and I fancy will hardly get over the autumn. My Lord and Betty desire to assure you of their compliments. I am, Sir, with the truest esteem, your, &c.

LETTER CXCII.

Frances Countess of Hartford, afterwards Dutchess of Somerset, to Dr. I. Watts.

Sir, June 10, 1739.

THOUGH I troubled you with a letter so lately, I cannot dispense with my impatience to thank you for the valuable present you have made me of one of the best books I ever saw.* I received it only on Friday night, but, as the goodness of Providence has allowed me many hours of leisure and retirement, I have had time enough to read so much of it as gives me the highest veneration for its author. I hope God will grant me grace not only to read it, but to endeavour after the piety it dictates, which is delivered in such a manner as both to convince the reason and touch the heart. I have forgot whether in any of my later letters I ever named to you a little book newly translated from the Italian by the same Mrs. Carter, who has a copy of verses printed in the beginning of Mrs. Rowe's Works occasioned by her death. The book she has now translated is Sir Isaac Newton's Doctrine of Light and Colours made easy for the Ladies. My daughter and I have both read it with great pleasure, and flatter ourselves that we at least understand some parts of it. She joins with her father and brother in their assurances of esteem and good wishes toward you, and I hope you are convinced that on both those subjects you may equally depend upon the sincerity of, Sir, yours, &c.

* Very probably his Discourses on the World to come, dated by him, in his preface, 1739.

LETTER CXCIII.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Marlborough, July 30, 1739.

I WOULD much sooner have written to you to thank you for the favour of your last letter, had I enjoyed more leisure; but I have had a friend with me this last month who has engrossed a good many of those hours which I used to employ in writing to my correspondents. She is a very pious and very religious, as well as agreeable, woman, and has seen enough of the world in her younger years to teach her to value its enjoyments, and fear its vexations, no more than they deserve, by which happy knowledge she has brought her mind and spirits to the most perfect state of calmness I ever saw, and her conversation seems to impart the blessing to all who partake of her discourse. By this you will judge that I have passed my time very much to my satisfaction while she was with me; and, though I have not written to you, you have shared my time with her, for almost all the hours I passed alone I have employed in reading your works, which for ever represent to my imagination the idea of a ladder or flight of steps, since every volume seems to rise a step nearer the language of heaven, and there is a visible progression towards that better country through every page; so that, though all breathe piety and just reason, the last seems to crown the whole, till you shall again publish something to enlighten a dark and obstinate age; for I must believe that the manner in which you treat divine subjects is more likely to reform and work upon the affections of your readers than that of any other writer now living. I hope God will in mercy to many thousands, myself in particular, prolong your life many years. I own this does not seem a kind wish to you, but I think you will be content to bear the infirmities of flesh some years longer, to be an instrument in the hands of God toward the salvation of your weak and distressed brethren. The joys of heaven cannot fade, but will be as glorious millions of ages to come as they are now; and what a moment will the longest life appear when it comes to be compared with eternity! My Lord desires to assure you

you of his regards and best wishes. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CXCIV.

From the same to the same.

Sir, Marlborough, Sept. 10, 1739.

I AM extremely glad to find that you have still a reserve of writings which the world may at some time or other hope to see, for without the least flattery (a vice I would always avoid, and more particularly on so important an occasion) it is my opinion that God has in a very extraordinary manner blessed your endeavours to the advancement of piety. I cannot help mentioning one instance of it to you, which has fallen within my own knowledge, of a person who, after having drunk extremely hard, and made a very ill husband for upwards of twenty years, has within this year and a half entirely changed his course of life, and is now as sober a man and as good an husband as is possible, and he himself says that his reformation has been entirely owing to reading your three volumes of sermons which were printed some years since.

I must beg you to direct your next letter to me at St. Leonard's Hill, for we remove thither (if it please God) the day after to-morrow for about two months. My Lord and my son assure you of their sincere regards, as I am sure Betty would do was she with me, but she is still in Yorkshire. I will not add any more at present than to desire the continuance of your prayers, and assure you that I am, with a real veneration and friendship, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCV.

From the same to the same

Sir, Mar. 28, 1739.

I AM very much ashamed when I consider how long I have been indebted to you for the favour of a letter, but since that time I have had my heart full of care, and my hands full of business. When I received yours my Lord was laid up with a severe fit of the gout which did not permit me to leave Windsor Forest (whither we are to return no more till the thirteenth of this month. When I first came to town I had the disagreeable news of my daughter's being ill in Yorkshire, but, I thank God, she is now well again, and I expect her in town next week. Besides all this, I have been busy in getting some things ready to go down into Buckinghamshire, to an house which my Lord has bought there of my Lord Bathurst, and where we are to go to-morrow morning, to pass there three or four days. It is the place which Mr. Pope in one of his letters to Mr. Digby calls my Lord B—'s extravagant bergeric.* The little paddock in which it stands perfectly answers that title. The house is old, but very convenient, and large enough; and what makes it very agreeable to me, though within ten miles, it looks as if it were an hundred from London. "The life of God in the Soul of Man" is a book which I have had and admired above these twelve years. Nothing can breathe a truer spirit of piety. My Lord and son desire to assure you of their services and best wishes, and I am, with a very sincere regard, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCVI.

Lord Barrington† to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Rev. Sir, London, Jan. 11, 1718.

I CANNOT dispense with myself from taking the first opportunity I have of acknowledging your great favour in assisting me so readily to offer up the praise due to Almighty God for his signal mercies vouchsafed me on three several occasions, and of assuring you that it was with the utmost concern I understood that I must not flatter myself with the hopes of your being with us in this last. But how very obliging are you, who would give yourself the trouble to let me know that, though you could not give me the advantage of your company as Hatton-Garden, yet I should not want your assistance at a distance, where you would address such petitions to heaven to meet ours as tend to render me one of the best and happiest men alive? This they will influence me to be in some measure, both

* A large sheep-fold.

† See his life in the *Biographia Britannica*.

by their prevalency at the throne of grace, and by instructing me in the most agreeable manner what I should aspire to. Whilst I read your letter I found my blood fired with the greatest ambition to be what you wish me. I will therefore carefully preserve it where it shall be least liable to accidents, and where it will be always most in my view. There, as I shall see what I ought to be, by keeping it always before me, I shall not only have the pleasure of observing the masterly strokes of the character you wish me, but I hope come in time to bear some resemblance to it.

Whilst you were praying for us, we did not forget you; nor shall I cease to beseech Almighty God to make you a bright example of passive virtue, till he shall see fit to restore you to that eminent degree of acceptableness and service you have once enjoyed. I am, Sir, your, &c.

My wife is very much obliged by your civility. She has desired a copy of your letter, which she says will be as useful to her, as it has been entertaining, if it be not her own fault. Both our humble services attend the good family where you are. I am sorry my Lady's cold is like to deprive us of their company on Wednesday.

LETTER CXCVII.

Lord Barrington to Dr. Isaac Watts.

Rev. Sir, Becket-House, Feb. 4, 1731.

AT last I have received the kind present* you so long since ordered me. I have read it over, and looked over some parts of it again. I shall lay it in my nursery, hall, and parlour, and keep it in my study. I think it a book that will be very instructive and entertaining to people of all ages and conditions. You know I am very much for the whole Bible's being looked through, and not one part of it only; or even the New Testament alone in prejudice of the rest. I think you have done very good service in giving us the Apocryphal history, as a part of the account of God's transactions with his people. But, after saying this, I must own to you I could have wished you had made your sections, especially at the beginning, not barely as historical ones, but with a view to the different dispensations of God to mankind (I mean in that part of the book before the law), though still preserving the order of the Bible. The breaks, that arise from that consideration, are what are most likely to lead us into the true knowledge of the Bible. Without them the history of the Bible will be little more than the amusement of other histories. I am, Sir, your, &c.

* Dr. Watts's View of the whole Scripture History.

LETTER CXCVIII.

Mr. John Locke, to Mr. Samuel Bold, at Steeple.

Sir,

YOURS of the eleventh of April, I received not till last week. I suppose Mr. Churchill staid it till that discourse, wherein you have been pleased to defend my essay, was printed, that they might come together; though neither of them needs a companion to recommend it to me. Your Reasonings are so strong and just, and your friendship to me so visible, that every thing must be welcome to me, that comes from your pen, let it be of what kind soever.

I promise myself, that to all those who are willing to open their eyes, and enlarge their minds, to a true knowledge of things, this little treatise of yours will be greatly acceptable and useful. And for those, that will shut their eyes for fear they should see farther than others have seen before them, or rather for fear they should use them, and not blindly and lazily follow the sayings of others, what can be done to them? They are to be let alone to join in the cry of the herd they have placed themselves in, and to take that for applause, which is nothing but the noise that of course they make to one another, which way ever they are going; so that the greatness of it is no manner of proof that they are in the right. I say not this, because it is a discourse wherein your favour any opinions of mine (for I take care not to be deceived by the reasonings of my friends), but say it from those who are strangers to you, and who own

own themselves to have received light and conviction from the clearness and closeness of your reasonings, and that in a matter at first sight very abstruse, and remote from ordinary conceptions.

There is nothing that would more rejoice me, than to have you for my neighbour. The advantage that you promise yourself from mine, I should receive from your conversation. The impartial lovers and seekers of truth are a great deal fewer than one could wish or imagine. It is a rare thing to find any one to whom one may communicate one's thoughts freely, and from whom one may expect a careful examination and impartial judgment of them. To be learned in the lump by other men's thoughts, and to be in the right by saying after others, is the much easier and quieter way; but how a rational man, that should inquire and know for himself, can content himself with a faith or religion taken upon trust, or with such a servile submission of his understanding, as to admit all, and nothing else but what fashion makes passable among men, is to me astonishing. I do not wonder you should have, in many points, different apprehensions from what you meet with in authors; with a free mind, that unbiassedly pursues truth, it cannot be otherwise. First, All authors did not write unbiassedly for truth sake. Secondly, There are scarce any two men, that have perfectly the same views of the same thing, till they come with attention, and perhaps mutual assistance, to examine it. A consideration that makes conversation with the living a thing much more desirable and useful than consulting the dead; would the living but be inquisitive after truth, apply their thoughts with attention to the gaining of it, and be indifferent where it was found, so they could but find it.

The first requisite to the profiting by books, is not to judge of opinions by the authority of the writers. None have the right of dictating but God himself, and that because he is Truth itself. All others have a right to be followed as far as I, *i. e.* as far as the evidence of what they say convinces; and of that my own understanding alone must be judge for me, and nothing else. If we made our own eyes our guides, and admitted or rejected opinions only by the evidence of reason, we should neither embrace or refuse any tenet, because we find it published by another, of what name or character soever he was.

You say you lose many things because they slip from you: I have had experience of that myself, but for that my Lord Bacon has provided a sure remedy. For, as I remember he advises somewhere, never to go without pen and ink, or something to write with; and to be sure not to neglect to write down all thoughts of moment that come into the mind. I must own I have omitted it often, and have often repented it. The thoughts that come unsought, and as it were dropt into the mind, are commonly the most valuable of any we have, and therefore should be secured, because they seldom return again. You say also that you lose many things, because your thoughts are not steady, and strong enough to pursue them to a just issue. Give me leave to think that herein you mistake yourself and your own abilities. Write down your thoughts upon any subject as far as you have at any time pursued them, and then go on again some other time when you find your mind disposed to it, and so till you have carried them as far as you can, and you will be convinced that, if you have lost any, it has not been for want of strength of mind to bring them to an issue; but for want of memory to retain a long train of reasonings, which the mind having once beat out, is loth to be at the pains to go over again; and so your connection and train having slipped the memory, the pursuit stops, and the reasoning is neglected before it comes to the last conclusion. If you have not tried it, you cannot imagine the difference there is in studying with and without a pen in your hand. Your ideas, if the connections of them that you have traced be set down, so that without the pains of recollecting them in your memory you can take an easy view of them again, will lead you farther than you can expect. Try, and tell me if it is not so. I say not this that I should not be glad to have any conversation upon whatever points you shall employ your thoughts about. Propose what you have of this kind freely, and do not suspect that it will interfere with my affairs.

Know, that beside the pleasure that it is to converse with a thinking man and a

lover of truth, I shall profit by it more than you. This you would see by the frequency of my visits, if you were within the reach of them.

That which I think of *Deut.* xii. 15. is this, that the reason, why it is said, *as the roebuck and the hart*, is because (*Lev.* xvii.) to prevent idolatry, in offering the blood to other Gods, they were commanded to kill all the cattle that they ate at the door of the tabernacle, as a peace offering, and sprinkle the blood on the altar; but wild beasts that were clean might be eaten, though their blood was not offered to God; (v. 13.) because being killed before they were taken, their blood could not be sprinkled on the altar; and therefore it sufficed in such cases, to pour out their blood wherever they were killed, and cover it with dust. And for the same reason, when the camp was broken up, wherein the whole people was in the neighbourhood of the tabernacle, during their forty years passage from Egypt to Canaan, and the people were scattered in their habitations through all the Land of Promise; those who were so far from the temple were excused (*Deut.* xii. 21. 22.) from killing their tame cattle at Jerusalem, and sprinkling their blood on the altar. No more was required of them than in killing a roebuck or any other wild beast; they were only to pour out the blood and cover it with dust, and so they might eat of the flesh. These are my thoughts concerning that passage.

What you say about critics and critical interpretations, particularly of the Scriptures, is not only in my opinion true, but of great use to be observed in reading learned commentators, who not seldom make it their business to shew in what sense a word has been used by other authors; whereas the proper business of a commentator, is to shew in what sense it was used by the author in that place, which in the Scripture we have reason to conclude was most commonly in the ordinary vulgar sense of the word or phrase known in that time, because the books were written, as you rightly observe, and adapted to the people. If critics had observed this, we should have in their writings less ostentation and more truth, and a great deal of darkness now spread on the scriptures had been avoided. I have a late proof of this myself, who have lately found in some passages of Scripture a sense quite different from what I understood them in before, or from what I found in commentators; and yet it appears so clear to me that when I see you next, I shall dare to appeal to you in it. But I read the word of God without prepossession or bias, and come to it with a resolution to take my sense from it, and not with a design to bring it to the sense of my system. How much that has made men wind, and twist and pull the text in all the several sects of Christians I need not tell you. "I design to take my religion from the "scripture, and then, whether it suits "or suits not any other denomination, I "am not much concerned: for I think, "at the last day, it will not be inquired whether I was of the church of "England or Geneva, but whether I "sought or embraced truth in the love "of it."

The proofs I have set down in my book of one infinite independent eternal Being, satisfy me; and the gentleman that designed others, and pretended that the next proposition to that of the existence of a self sufficient Being should be this, that such a Being is but One, and that he could prove it antecedent to his attributes, *viz.* infinite, omnipotency, &c. I am since pretty well satisfied, pretended to what he had not, and therefore I trouble not myself any farther about the matter. As to what you say on the occasion, I agree with you, that the ideas of modes and actions of substances are usually in our minds before the idea of substance itself: but in this I differ from you, that I do not think the ideas of the operations of things are antecedent to the ideas of their existence; for they must exist before they can any ways affect us, to make us sensible of their operations, and we must suppose them to be before they operate.

The Essay is going to be printed again: I wish you were near, that I might shew you the several alterations and additions I have made, before they go to the press. The warm weather that begins now with us, makes me hope I shall now speedily get to town. If any business draws you hither this summer, I hope you will order it so, that I may have a good share of your company. Nobody values it more than I, and I have a great many things to talk with you. I am, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCIX.

Dr. Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury (afterwards Archbishop), to a Friend, who lay very ill of a languishing distemper, whereof he died.

Sir,

I AM sorry to understand by Mr. T—'s letter to my son, that your distemper grows upon you, and that you seem to decline so fast. I am very sensible how much easier it is to give advice against trouble, in the case of another, than to take it in our own. It hath pleased God to exercise me of late with a very sore trial, in the loss of my dear and only child; in which I do perfectly submit to his good pleasure, firmly believing that he always does what is best; and yet, though reason be satified, our passion is not so soon appeased; and when nature has received a wound, time must be allowed for the healing of it. Since that, God hath thought fit to give me a nearer summons, and a closer warning of my mortality, in the danger of an apoplexy; which yet, I thank God for it, hath occasioned no very melancholy reflections; but this perhaps, is more owing to natural temper than philosophy and wise consideration. Your case, I know, is very different, who are of a temper naturally melancholy, and under a distemper apt to increase it, for both which great allowances are to be made.

And yet, methinks, both reason and religion do offer to us considerations of that solidity and strength, as may very well support our spirits, under all the frailties and infirmities of the flesh; such as these, that God is perfect love and goodness; that we are not only his creatures, but his children, and as dear to him as to our ourselves; that he does not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men: and that all evils and afflictions which befall us, are intended for the cure and prevention of greater evils of sin, and punishment! and thereof we ought not only to submit to them with patience, as being deserved by us, but to receive them with thankfulness, as being designed by him to do us that good, and to bring us to that sense of him and ourselves, which perhaps nothing else would have done; that the sufferings of this present life are but short and slight, compared with that extreme and endless misery, which we have deserved; and with that exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which we hope for in the other world; that if we be careful to make the best preparation we can for death and eternity, whatever brings us nearer to our end, brings us nearer to our happiness; and how rugged soever the way be, the comfort is, that it leads to our Father's house, where we shall want nothing that we can wish. When we labour under a dangerous distemper that threatens our life, what would we not be content to bear in order to a perfect recovery, could we be assured of it? And should we not be willing to endure much more, in order to happiness, and that eternal life which God, that cannot lie, hath promised? Nature, I know, is fond of life, and apt to be still lingering after a longer continuance here: and yet a long life, with the usual burdens and infirmities of it, is seldom desirable; it is but the same thing over again, or worse, so many more days or nights, summers and winters; a repetition of the same pleasures, but with less pleasure and relish every day; a return of the same, or greater, pains and trouble, but with less patience and strength to bear them.

These, and the like considerations, I use to entertain myself withal, and not only with contentment, but comfort, though with great inequality of temper, at several times, and with much mixture of human frailty, which will always stick to us whilst we are in this world. However, by these kind of thoughts, death becomes more familiar to us, and we shall be able by degrees to bring our minds close up to it, without startling at it. The greatest tenderness I find in myself is with regard to some near relations, especially the dear and constant companion of my life, which, I must confess, doth very sensibly touch me; but when I consider, and so I hope will they also, that this separation will be but for a little while, and that though I shall leave them in a bad world, yet under the care and protection of a good God, who can be more and better to them than all other relations, and will certainly be so to them that love him, and hope in his mercy.

I shall

I shall not need to advise you what to do, and what use to make of this time of your visitation; I have reason to believe, that you have been careful in the time of your health, to prepare for this evil day, and have been conversant in those books which give the best directions to this purpose, and have not, as so many do, put off the great work of your life to the end of it; and then you have nothing now to do, but as well as you can, under your present weakness and pains, to renew your repentance, for all the errors and miscarriages of your life, and earnestly to beg God's pardon and forgiveness of them, for his sake who is the propitiation for our sins; to comfort yourself in the goodness and promises of God, and the hopes of that happiness you are ready to enter into; and in the mean time to exercise faith and patience for a little while, and be of good courage, since you see land; the storm you are in will be quickly over, and then it will be as if it never had been, or rather the remembrance of it will be a pleasure.

I do not use to write such long letters; but I do heartily compassionate your case, and should be glad if I could suggest any thing that might help to mitigate your trouble, and make that sharp and rough way, through which you are to pass into a better world, a little more smooth and easy. I pray to God to fit us both for that great change, which we must once undergo; and, if we be but in any good measure fit for it, sooner or later makes no great difference. I commend you to the Father of Mercies, and God of consolation, beseeching him to increase your faith and patience, and to stand by you in your last and great conflict; and that, when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you may fear no evil; and when your heart fails, and your strength fails, you may find him the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever. Farewel, my good friend; and while we are here, let us pray for one another, that we may have a joyful meeting in another world. I rest, Sir, your truly affectionate friend and servant.

LETTER CC.

Mrs. Rowe to her Mother.

Madam,

I AM now taking my final adieu of this world, in certain hopes of meeting you in the next. I carry to my grave my affection and gratitude to you. I leave you with the sincerest concern for your own happiness, and the welfare of your family. May my prayers be answered when I am sleeping in the dust. May the angels of God conduct you in the paths of immortal pleasure.

I would collect the powers of my soul, and ask blessings for you with all the holy violence of prayer. God Almighty, the God of your pious ancestors, who has been your dwelling-place for many generations, bless you.—It is but a short space I have to measure—my shadows are lengthening, and my sun declining; that goodness which has hitherto conducted me, will not fail me in the last concluding act of life: that name which I have made my glory and my boast, shall then be my strength and my salvation.

To meet death with a becoming fortitude, is a part above the powers of nature, and which I can perform by no power or holiness of my own; for oh! in my best estate, I am altogether vanity—a wretched helpless sinner; but in the merits and perfect righteousness of God my Saviour, I hope to appear justified at the supreme tribunal, where I must shortly stand to be judged,

[N. B. This letter was not to be sent to her mother till she was dead.]

LETTER CCI.

Archbishop Herring to William Duncombe, Esq.

Croydon-House,
Dear Sir, October 16, 1754.

I SHALL be very glad to see the work of your summer's meditation, and, if you desire it, will submit it to a friend's perusal; though I had rather be excused doing that, for the reason which you suggest it being very likely that the person

person I would chuse to trust may possibly engage in the cause himself. What you are about is quite out of the way of the following reflection, which I am led to make by knowing that several weak pens are at work upon Bolingbroke. I own I have my fears on this head, that more harm may be done than good. Lord Bolingbroke, as you justly observe, is obscured in a cloud of unintelligible metaphysics, in many parts of his works is dark and obscure, and desultory throughout; has no consistent system; is most tiresomely long; his mischievous tenets, some of them absurd, (as the denial of final causes, &c.) and the poison of his book so diluted, that it cannot, I think, do much hurt. But if injudicious writers set themselves to extract the essence of it, and draw all his fire (an *ignus fatuus* as it lies) to a *focus*, the remedy should be very strong and the operator an able chymist, to prevent its doing mischief. This work should not be trusted to bunglers.

Besides, the people in danger from Lord Bolingbroke's writings, are the loose and the wits, who will never sit down to read grave and solid answers. Irony and joke in the literary way, are the only means to deal with him, and one cannot help wishing, that the age which produced Lord Bolingbroke had produced such an antagonist wit as Mr. Bayle was, who could render him ridiculous while he confuted him. Dr. Warburton, you see, attempts this*; and, if he had more delicacy, it would be with more success. However, there are more excellent things in his second letter, and I think he has exposed his reasonings well upon the moral nature of the Deity.—Here your plan will coincide with him; and though I know your heart and your talents, you will not be offended, if I say, that you will combat the better, for attacking in the armour of Cicero. I am, dear Sir, &c.

* In his "View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy."

LETTER CCII.

M. de Voltaire to the Author of the Dialogues of the Dead.

My Lord,

I HAVE read the ingenious Dialogues of the Dead. I find "that I am an exile, "and guilty of some excesses in writ-"ing." I am obliged (and perhaps for the honour of my country) to say I am no exile, because I have not committed the excesses the author of the Dialogues imputes to me.

Nobody raised his voice higher than mine in favour of the rights of mankind; yet I have not exceeded even in that virtue.

I am not settled in Switzerland, as he believes. I live in my own lands in France. Retreat is becoming to old age, and more becoming in one's own possessions. If I enjoy a little country house near Geneva, my manors and my castles are in Burgundy; and if my king has been pleased to confirm the privileges of my lands, which are free from all tributes, I am the more addicted to my king.

If I was an exile, I had not obtained from my court many a passport for English noblemen.

The service I rendered to them entitles me to the justice I expect from the noble author.

As to religion, I think, and I hope he thinks with me, that God is neither a presbyterian nor a Lutheran, nor of the low church, nor of the high church! but God is the father of all mankind, the father of the noble author, and mine. I am with respect, his most humble servant.

VOLTAIRE.

Gentleman of the king's chamber.

At my castle of Tornex in Burgundy.

ANSWER.

Sir,

I HAVE received the honour of your letter dated from your castle at Tornex in Burgundy, by which I find I was guilty of an error in calling your retirement "an exile." When another edition shall be made of my Dialogues, either in English or in French, I will take care that

that this error shall be corrected: and I am very sorry I was not apprized of it sooner that I might have corrected it in the first edition of a French translation just published under my inspection in London. To do you justice is a duty I owe to truth and myself; and you have a much better title to it than from the *passports* you say you have procured for English noblemen: you are entitled to it, Sir, by the high sentiments of respect I have for you, which are not paid to the *privileges*, you tell me, your king has confirmed to your lands, but to the *noble talents* God has given you, and the superior rank you hold in the republic of letters. The favours done you by your sovereign, are an honour to *him*, but add little lustre to the name of *Voltaire*.

I entirely agree with you "that God "is the father of all mankind;" and should think it blasphemy to confine his goodness to a sect; nor do I believe that any of his creatures are good in his sight if they do not extend their benevolence to all his creation. These opinions I rejoice to see in your works, and shall be very happy to be convinced that the liberty of your thoughts and your pen, upon subjects of philosophy and religion, never exceed the bounds of this generous principle, which is authorized by revelation, as much as by reason; or that you disapprove, in your hours of sober reflection, any irregular sallies of fancy, which cannot be *justified*, though they may be *excused*, by the vivacity and fire of a great genius. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

LETTER CCIII.

Mr. P— at B— to Mr. W— at L—.

July 20, 1753.

You are surprised, Sir, and so is all Europe, at M. Voltaire's disgrace with the king of Prussia. Nobody can yet comprehend how it hath been possible to exasperate a philosophic king against his first favorite, to whom, during sixteen years, he hath behaved rather like a faithful friend than a gracious prince. All the world knows that his Majesty, charmed with the lyre of this new Orpheus, never ceased his applications to draw him to his court, that he might be more intimately acquainted with his muse, which hath so much contributed to refine his taste and to make him an author; a character of which he is as jealous as he is of that of a king, M. Voltaire had resolved not to quit his native country, but he could not resist the pressing instances of his Prussian Majesty, which were too honourable to him to be disregarded. He therefore left Paris and went to Berlin, in the summer of the year 1750. The King of Prussia immediately loaded him with his favours. Not content with assigning him a large pension, he also honoured him with the key of chamberlain, and his Order of Merit. For two years together M. Voltaire continued in high favour with his Majesty, and thought himself well established, when he began to perceive some marks of jealousy in a man whom he had before reckoned amongst his friends, and who had obtained the king's protection by the great noise he had caused to be made about his northern expedition; and when he saw the high opinion that had been conceived of his merit was upon the decline, and that he was unable to keep it up by any other extraordinary performances, endeavoured to secure the continuance of the royal favour by craft and artifice. This was M. Maupertuis, president of the academy of Berlin. It is well known to the literary world how he hath strained to obtain the character of a great man, and an inventor, by a piece which he hath published under the title of Letters. The learned, and amongst the rest M. Voltaire, found so many absurdities in these letters, that he could not forbear writing a satire on the occasion. This satire was upon the point of being published at Potsdam, under the title of, The Diatriba of Dr. Akakia, when M. Maupertuis, being apprised of it by one of his creatures, obtained the King's orders for suppressing the work. It is probable that this suppression was only designed by his Majesty to reconcile the two compatriot courtiers, but M. Maupertuis looked upon it as a mark of his superiority in the esteem of his master, and, relying upon this, he took the liberty to tell the king a thousand lies to ruin the credit and reputation

tation of M. Voltaire.—A manuscript copy of The Diatriba of Dr. Akakia having fallen into the hands of a bookseller in Holland, it soon appeared in print, to the great satisfaction of the public. M. Maupertuis was enraged at this and the more so, as M. Voltaire, in this satire, had taken part with M. Koenig, counsellor and library-keeper to his most serene highness the Prince Stadtholder at the Hague, who with the strongest arguments had attacked his principle of the least action, the dispute concerning which is well known to all the learned in Europe. M. Maupertuis immediately, with all the aggravating circumstances he could think of, represented this to his Majesty as an offence against the royal authority. It was necessary to make the King consider it in this light, in order to raise his indignation to the highest pitch. It was in vain that M. Voltaire protested, and even made oath, that he did all he could to prevent the impression (and of this I myself was an eye-witness.) He was condemned: the Diatriba of Dr. Akakia was, by the King's order, burnt at Berlin, by the hands of the common executioner, and the King caused the transaction to be published in the gazettes of Berlin.

The first step which M. Voltaire took after this scene, was to return the King his key of Chamberlain and his Order of Merit, and to beg leave to retire. The King immediately sent back the key and the cross, accompanied with a very courteous letter, wherein he intimated, that it would be very agreeable to him, if M. Voltaire would continue to reside at his court, and accept his pension. Out of respect to his Majesty, M. Voltaire retained the key and the cross, but persisted in desiring his dismission. To this request he could get no answer. M. Maupertuis continued his intrigues, and even obtained the King's leave to compromise his academical dispute with M. Koenig. The King published a letter, wherein he thought proper to relate all the injurious things concerning Mess. Voltaire and Koenig, that M. Maupertuis had presumed to tell him one night, after the opera was ended, when his Majesty went in his domino to M. Maupertuis's house, and conversed with him some hours in his bed-chamber.

The public in general declared for M. Voltaire and M. Koenig; but notwithstanding this, M. Maupertuis found means to hinder truth from approaching the throne. M. Voltaire was disgraced, and yet could not obtain his dismission, not even permission to go to the waters for the recovery of his health. It was even prohibited, throughout the Marquisate of Brandenburgh, to furnish M. Voltaire with horses, or to suffer him to pass. At length, however, I know not how, he obtained permission to go to the baths of Plombieres, and he took his leave of the King at Potsdam, to which place he promised to return in the month of October. But his enemy, who threatened to go to Leipsic to assassinate him, hath played his part so well, that M. Voltaire hath been disgraced afresh, as you will see by the letters herewith sent These letters, as well as that of the King of Prussia, which I send on account of the relation it has to the others, are very authentic. I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER CCIV.

M —— at Francfort upon the Maine, to M. —— at the Hague.

July 8, 1753.

AFTER having dispatched the last letter I wrote you, I had the honour to receive yours of the third of this month: and as in *that* letter I have given you all the eclaircissement you demanded concerning M. Voltaire's affair, I will confine myself in *this* to what has passed here at Fancfort.

M. de Freytag, the King of Prussia's resident in this city, immediately after M. Voltaire's arrival here, re-demanded of him the cross of the Order of Merit, the key of chamberlain, and also a small casket, wherein, it is said, is a manuscript in the King's own hand. M. Voltaire immediately delivered the two first, and gave his parole, that the casket, which he had sent forward with his baggage to Strasburgh, should be produced in eight days, and at the same time dispatched one of his domestics to Strasburgh to fetch it. It was accordingly brought back, and M. Voltaire having delivered it to M. de Freytag, had an acquittance.

acquittance, and leave given him in the King's name to depart whenever he pleased. After a few days he set out for Wishaden: but he was stopped by the guard at the gates of the city, and M. de Freytag shewed him a new order of the King of Prussia, to arrest him; but this order was not signed by the King himself. He was, however, carried back under the guard of four soldiers and a subaltern officer, to the house of a merchant called Schmidt. There M. Voltaire was very ill treated by the resident, who kept him very close, allowed his pocket to be searched, and eighty louis d'ors, found therein, to be taken from him. He was then conducted to an inn, together with his niece and secretary, under the guard of a soldier; and to affront him the more, the secretary was obliged to pass the first night in the same chamber with M. Voltaire's niece; M. Voltaire himself being shut up in another chamber with the guard. The day before yesterday he was released, and it is said that the order to arrest him at the gate was sent to the resident by one of his enemies, who had the temerity to make use of the King's name. Time must inform us of the consequences of this affair. M. Voltaire will yet go to some of the baths, but to which of them is not known. Thus I have told you all I know concerning this affair. I had it from the mouth of a person to whom M. Voltaire himself related it. I am on all occasions at your service, and have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER CCV.

From the King of Prussia, in his own hand, to M. Voltaire

Aug. 23, 1750.

I HAVE seen the letter which your niece writes you from Paris. The friendship which she expresses for you, hath gained her my esteem. If I were Madam Denis, I should think as she does, but being what I am, I think otherwise. It would be the greatest affliction to me, to be the cause of an enemy's misery; how then can I wish ill to a man whom I esteem, and who hath sacrificed to me his native country, and every thing that mankind hold most dear? No, my dear Voltaire, if I could foresee that your transplantation could possibly turn in the least degree to your disadvantage, I would be the first to dissuade you from it. Yes, I would prefer your happiness to the extreme pleasure your presence would give me. But you are a philosopher; I am one too: and can any thing be more natural, more rational, and more regular than that philosophers, united by the same studies, the same taste, and a similiar manner of thinking, and born to live together, should give themselves that satisfaction? I respect you as my master in eloquence and science: I love you as a virtuous friend: what slavery, what misfortunes, what changes, what inconstancy of fortune then have you to fear in a country where you are as much esteemed as in your native country, and with a friend who hath a grateful heart? I am not so vain as to imagine that Berlin is equal to Paris. If riches, grandeur, and magnificence, make a city delightful, we yield to Paris. If there be a place in the world, where good taste is more universally and extensively diffused, I know and agree, that it is at Paris. But do not you introduce this taste wherever you go? We have organs which suffice to applaud you, and in point of sentiment and gratitude, we yield to no country in the world. I pay regard to the friendship which attaches you to Madam du Chatelet, but after her I am one of your oldest friends. What, because you will live in my house, it will be said that this house is your prison! What, because I am your friend, I shall be your tyrant! I own to you, that I do not understand this logic, that I am firmly persuaded that you will be very happy here during my life, that you will be regarded as the father of learning and taste, and that you will find in me all the consolation that a man of your merit may expect from one who perfectly esteems him. Good night.

LETTER CCVI.

M. Voltaire to Madam Denis, his Niece.

Mayence, July 9. 1753.

THREE or four years having elapsed since I shed a tear, I flattered myself that mine eyes would not have known this weakness again till they had closed for ever. Yesterday Count de Stadian's secretary found me dissolved in tears;

years: your departure and present situation was the cause of my affliction. The cruel severity of your sufferings lost its horror when you were present: your patience and your courage roused mine, but after your departure I had no support. I cannot sometimes help imagining that it is all a dream: I fancy these things to have been transacted in the reign of Dionysius of Syracuse. Can it be true, I ask myself, that a lady of Paris, travelling with a passport from the King her master, can have been dragged through the streets of Francfort by soldiers, imprisoned without any form of trial, denied the convenience of a waiting woman or any domestic, the door of the prison guarded by four soldiers, with their bayonets fixed to their muskets, and compelled to suffer a tool of this Freytag, one of the most abandoned villains, to pass the night alone in her apartment? When la Brinvilliers was confined, the executioner was never left alone with her. So barbarous an indecency is without example. And what was your crime? The having travelled 100 leagues to accompany to the waters of Plombieres a dying uncle, whom you regard as your father. It is certainly a dishonour to the King of Prussia that he has not yet made reparation for such an indignity, committed in his name, by a man who calls himself his minister.

An additional affliction this to me: He caused me to be arrested to regain his printed book of poems, with which he had favoured me, and to which I had some claim. He had left it with me as the pledge of his favour, and as the reward of his toils. He was desirous to resume it; a single word would have done; there was no occasion to imprison an old man who was going to drink the waters. He might have remembered, that by his winning favours for above 16 years, he had given me reason to believe myself in his good graces; that he had taken me from my country in my old age; that I had assisted him, for two years together, in perfecting his talents; that I served him faithfully, and had never failed in any part of my duty; lastly, that it was unworthy his rank and glory to take part in an academical quarrel, and for my only recompense, to end all, by ordering soldiers to demand his poems of me. I hope that sooner or later he will be convinced that he has gone too far, that my enemy has deceived him, and that neither the author nor the King ought so greatly to have imbittered the last days of my life. He hath followed the dictates of his passion, but he will hereafter follow those of his reason and goodness. But what will he do to atone for the abominable outrages offered to you in his name? My Lord Marshall will, doubtless, be charged to efface, if possible, the remembrance of the horrors of Freytag's treatment.

Letters have been sent me hither for you. One of them is from Madam Fontaine, and is not very consolatory. It is pretended that I have been a Prussian: if by this is meant, that by my attachment and enthusiastic zeal I have made a return for the extraordinary favours which the King of Prussia hath conferred upon me for sixteen years running, the charge is just; but if it is designed to insinuate that I have been his subject, or ceased to be a Frenchman for a single moment, it is entirely false. The King of Prussia never proposed any such thing, and gave me the key of chamberlain only as a mark of his goodness, which he himself calls frivolous in the verses which he made when he gave me this key and the cross, both which I have laid at his feet. These marks of distinction required neither oath, duty, nor naturalization. Wearing an order does not make one a subject. M. Decoville, who is in Normandy, yet retains the key of chamberlain to the King of Prussia, which he wears with the cross of the order of St. Lewis. It would be highly unjust not to regard me as a Frenchman, when I have all along kept my house at Paris, and have paid the capitation. Is it possible that the author of "The Age of "Lewis XIV." should be seriously charged with not being a Frenchman? Would any one dare to say it before the statues of Henry IV.? I will add, of Lewis XV. since I am the only academician who wrote his panegyric when he gave us peace, and since he has himself this panegyric translated into six languages. His Prussian Majesty, being deceived by my enemy, and impelled by passion, may have irritated the King my master against me, but his justice and greatness of soul will gain the ascendant, and he will be the first to desire the King my master to

pern it

permit me to end my days in my own country. He will call to mind that he has been my disciple, and that I have gained nothing from him, but the honour of enabling him to write better than myself. He will be contented with this superiority, and will not make use of that which his rank gives him to oppress a stranger, who hath sometimes instructed, always esteemed and respected him.

I cannot ascribe to him the letters published against me in his name. He hath too much greatness of mind to treat a private person in such an outrageous manner. He knows too well how a King ought to write, and what regard is to be paid to good manners and decency of behaviour. He is born signally to display his goodness and clemency. This was the character of our good and glorious King Henry IV. He was hasty and passionate, but he soon recovered himself; passion governed only for a moment, humanity all his life.

See, my dear, what an uncle, or rather a sick father, dictates to his daughter. It will be some comfort to me if you arrive in good health. My compliments to your brother and sister. Adieu! May I die in your arms unknown to men and kings!

LETTER CCVII.

The Right Honourable Horace Walpole, afterwards Lord Walpole, to a Friend in Holland.

Woolterton, Norfolk,
May 29, 1745.

Dear Sir,

I am really ashamed of having neglected so long to return you, and my good old friend who remembers me so kindly, and so often, my grateful thanks for your generous sympathy with me in the affliction I feel from the death of my dear brother, the late Lord Orford. This heavy shock made so deep an impression upon my heart, that for a long time I could do nothing but lament my own loss.—I am very sorry to have been from home when the gentleman, recommended by our good Nestor did me the honour of a visit: I hope to meet him this winter in town, and then to make amends for this unlucky disappointment.

As to politics, I can only tell you, that my thoughts, as well as my situation, are at a great distance from them, and my *res rustica* employs me entirely. Retired from the noise and nonsense of a public station, no man, I thank God, can have more reason than I have to be satisfied with the more solid and innocent pleasures of a private life. In this situation, my mind is kept in a pleasing activity, very different from that which arises from the tumult of passions and the hurry of affairs. My house, of my own building, is not extremely large nor little; is neither to be envied nor despised. The disposition of the rooms is neither magnificent nor contemptible, but convenient. The situation is upon an eminence, that commands a most agreeable prospect of woods, intermixed with fruitful fields, and so sheltered by thick and lofty trees in the cold quarters, as not to be exposed to the inclemency of the rigorous seasons. It is encompassed with a most delightful and innocent army of vegetable striplings of my own raising, which are already (though not of twenty years growth from the seed), with a becoming rivalship, stretching and swelling themselves into timber. They are all of noble and worthy extraction; the names of their families are Oaks, Spanish Chesnuts, and Beech; and I believe none of their relations in any country can be more promising and hopeful than they are. They are so ranged and disciplined as to form in some parts, most agreeable lines, and walks, and openings; in other places, from the right and left, they discover spacious and delightful lawns. Before my house, on the south, a green carpet of the finest verdure gratifies the eye, and gradually leads it into a more extended plain. On one side, a lake of living water catches and fills the sight, from whence a most beautiful fluid glides with a serpentine and seemingly endless current, and loses itself in a wood on the other. My rural walks and contemplations, amidst this mild, diversified, and engaging scene, afford me constantly new resources of health and pleasure, and make me lament the noisy, anxious, and tumultuous hours spent amidst the broils of faction, or in vain attempts to serve an ungrateful public. If this description pleases you, come, my dear friend, come and partake of the beauties from whence it is drawn. Come, and let us remember our friends in a modest cup of smil-

ing,

ing, home-brewed ale, forget and forgive your enemies, and pray for the peace and liberties of Europe; the first of which, I am afraid, is not so near as I could wish, because the last seems to be in greater danger than ever; which, notwithstanding my retirement, and my philosophical pretensions, gives me frequently uneasy moments.

The beginning of the campaign, by the successful progress of the Austrians in Bavaria, and the consequent reconciliation of that prince with the Queen of Hungary, were very hopeful, and could not have been bought too dear by the maritime powers, if a right use had been made of them. The use I mean, would have been to have laid hold of the King of P——'s offers (if he had made any tolerable ones), and put him out of the scale against us. I know the character of that Prince, I know how little he is to be trusted, and I would not have trusted him without good security for the execution of his engagements. But if he would have agreed to abandon France, and would have given, by disarming, or by any other means, security for his good behaviour, the difference of an hundred thousand not acting against us, while all the other Princes and Electors of Germany, either out of affection or fear, had in a manner declared for us, would have greatly strengthened the common cause, and put the operations upon a right principle, in carrying them directly against France, and against France standing alone. Such a diversion might have been made in Alsace, and such a reinforcement sent into the Low Countries, as would have given the allies a great superiority, enabled them to have recovered what they had lost, and to have pressed the French so closely as to have obliged them to grant us a safe and honourable peace. But now, my dear friend, I apprehend, that the principal object of the Court of Vienna will be (leaving the Low Countries to be defended by the maritime powers) to distract, divide, and devour the Prussian dominions. Their pride, their vengeance, and above all their bigotry, will naturally lead them to destroy a Protestant power, that has dared to offend them. It is true, the Protestant Prince, in whose hand this power is lodged, deserves to be chastised for the unworthy and perfidious use he has made of it. But I cannot wish to see that Protestant power destroyed; it may some time or other fall into better and honester hands, and may thereby prove of singular advantage for preserving the Protestant religion and the liberties of Europe. Hence it is that I have often wished to see a strict and lasting union in peace and war, between the maritime powers and the House of Brandenburg, so as to make their mutual defence of the Protestant religion, and the balance of Europe, a common cause between them. For the late long and expensive wars have so exhausted England and Holland, as to make it impossible for them to exert themselves, as they have formerly done, for those good ends, without a supplemental power, such as Brandenburgh, taking a share in it, and bearing, by men and money, some part of the necessary charge. I know the debts of England: and I need not tell you of the debts of Holland, which (in proportion to the extent and opulence of the two countries) are still more enormous. I need not tell you also, that the House of Brandenburgh is a rising house; the economy of the late King of Prussia, the spirit of discipline he introduced into his army, the ambition, talents, and active genius of the present monarch, must render that house a powerful friend or formidable enemy. But can we, will you say, be allied with the Houses of Austria and Brandenburgh at the same time? I answer in the affirmative; because I believe the thing possible now. How long it may be so, exceeds my foresight to determine. Perhaps these two powers may, from the *amor sceleratus habendi*, or the lust of ambition, come to look upon their interests to be so irreconcileable, that it will become scarcely possible to be well with them both. In such a case, we must chuse which of the two it will be most prudent to adhere to; and, for my part, I should not once hesitate in the choice. I may perhaps be singular in my opinion here; but I know the Court of Vienna too well ever to expect the smallest spark of gratitude, generosity, or public spirit, in their transactions with us. Their conduct in this present war, which has been undertaken more on their own behalf than ours! the state of their troops, which are, by near 40,000, inferior to the number stipulated;

the timorous and indifferent conduct of troops thus deficient; all this makes me look about to see if there is any thing in the Queen of Hungary, except her fair face, that ought to make her the darling of the British nation and of the United Provinces. Besides I cannot easily forget the perfidious plan formed by her father Charles VI. for the extirpation of the Protestant religion, and the placing of the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain: not that I would visit the iniquity of the father on the daughter, had I not good reasons to believe that the same spirit reigns in her. But I almost forget my rural character, while I thus launch again into the wide, uncertain, vague ocean of politics. You see the power of habit, and how easy it is to fall back into the old track, in which one's thoughts have run for several years together. Adieu, then, my dear friend; present my most cordial remembrance to our venerable Nestor, who is so much a better judge of all these matters than I am, that he will perhaps laugh at my political combinations. I hope, however, that the more shining and agreeable talents of Lord Chesterfield have not entirely buried my sincerity and frankness in oblivion. I never pretended to any other qualifications. And in this respect, even the foul-mouthed spirit of party here did me some sort of justice; it called me sometimes an ass, but I do not remember that it ever stiled me a rogue. I am, with all affection, yours, &c.

LETTER CCVIII.

Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford, after his retirement, to General Churchill.

Dear Charles,

I HAVE now wrote to Captain J–ks–n, to give Lord Ty—ley a ticket, as you desired, and am very glad to oblige him with it.

This place affords no news, no subject of amusement and entertainment to you fine gentlemen. Persons of wit and pleasure about town, understand not the language, nor taste the charms of the inanimate world. The oaks, the beeches, and chesnuts, seem to contend which shall best please the lord of the manor. They cannot deceive, they will not lie. I, in return, with sincerity admire them, and have about me as many beauties, as take up all my hours of dangling; and no disgrace attends me since sixty-seven.* Within doors we come a little to real life, and admire the almost speaking canvas;† all the airs and graces which the proudest of the ladies can boast. With these I am satisfied, as they gratify me with all I wish and all I want, and expect nothing in return, which I cannot give.

If these, dear Charles, are any temptations, I heartily invite you to come and partake of them. Shifting the scene, has sometimes its recommendations; and from country fare, you may possibly return, with a better appetite, to the more delicate entertainment of a court life.

Since I wrote what is above, we have been surprised with the good news‡ from abroad. Too much cannot be said upon it; for it is truly matter of infinite joy, because of infinite consequence. I am, dear Charles, yours affectionately.

LETTER CCIX.

Lady Hertford (afterwards Dutchess of Somerset) to the Hon. Mrs. Knight.

Percy-Lodge,
Dear Madam, May 16, 1746.

I OUGHT, and really intended, to have made use of the permission you gave me, to trouble you with a letter before this time; but you do not need any thing to lower your spirits, and my letters can hardly have any other effect upon harder hearts than yours. When I lost my dear, and by me, ever-lamented son,§ every faculty to please (if ever I were possessed of any such) died with him. I have no

* The year of his age, when he resigned, Feb. 9, 1742.

† We are told by a good judge, that there are not a great many collections of pictures left in Italy, more worth seeing, than were those at Houghton-Hall, in Norfolk, the seat of Lord Orford. In the preservation of the pictures it excelled most of them. The pictures that hung in the house in Downing-street, were removed thither. That house belonged to the Crown: King George I. gave it to Baron Bothmas, the Hanoverian minister, for life. On his death, the late King offered it to Sir Robert Walpole, but he would only accept it for his office, of First Lord of the Treasury, to which post he got it annexed for ever. Edes Walpolianæ, p. ix. 76.

‡ The battle of Dettingen, the news of which was received at London on the 25d of June, 1743.

§ Lord Beauchamp.

longer

longer any cheerful thoughts to communicate to my friends; but as the joy and pride of my heart withers in his grave, my mind is continually haunting those mansions of the dead, and is but too inattentive to what passes in a world, where I have still duties and attachments, which I ought to be, and, I hope, I may truly say, I am thankful for. I am sure my affection for my Lord Hertford, and solicitude for his welfare, are sincere; since, if I know my own heart, I would not deliberate a moment to lay down my life for his service. Lady Betty and Sir Hugh Smithson, and their children, are justly dear to me: and I still feel the bonds of tender friendship: but I enjoy all these blessings with trembling and anxiety; for, after my dear Beauchamp, what human things can appear permanent? Youth, beauty, virtue, health, were not sufficient to save him from the hand of death! and who then can think themselves secure? These are the melancholy considerations, which generally entertain my waking hours. Though sometimes I am able to view the bright side of my fate, and ask myself, for whom I grieve? Only for myself! How narrow an affection does this imply! Could he have lived long as my fondest wish desired, what could I have asked, at the end of that term, more, than the assurance that he should be placed where I humbly hope, and confidently trust, he is, beyond the reach of sorrow, sin, or sickness? But I must leave a subject, which, though I am never tired of, I ought, in regard to my friends, to be silent upon, and ask you where you would have the collection of Letters sent, which you were so good to subscribe for at my desire? I have a letter from Mr. Collins this day, in which he desires to receive your commands. My Lord and Mr. Cowland charge me with their compliments to you. I am, with great truth, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CCX.

Countess of Hertford to Lady Luxborough.

Piercy-Lodge,
Dear Madam, May 15, 1748.

How long soever your letters are in coming, they never fail to assure their welcome, by being more agreeable and entertaining, as well as breathing more of friendship, that any body's else have the art of doing. I have been here about a month, and find some little improvements, which were ordered when we went to London, completed; and I think they are not quite unworthy of the name. A piece of waste ground, on the lower side of the Abbey-walk, has been turned into a corn-field, and a turf-walk, about eight feet wide, round it, close to a flourishing hawthorn-hedge: on one side there is a thatched seat open on three sides, which pretends to no name of greater dignity, than justly belongs to what it represents, namely a shepherd's hut; before it there is an irregular piece of turf, which was spared for the sake of some old oaks and beeches, which are scattered upon it; and as you are sitting down there, you have, under these boughs, a direct view of Windsor Castle. There are sweet-williams, narcissus's, rose-campions, and such flowers as the hares will not eat, in little borders, round the foot of every tree; and I almost flatter myself, that you would not be displeased with the rural appearance of the whole. The rains have given us the strongest verdure I ever saw; our lawns and meadows are enamelled with a profusion of daisies and cowslips; and we have the greatest appearance of fruit that has been seen these many years. I conclude you will read Mr. Thomson's Castle of Indolence; it is after the manner of Spenser, but I think he does not always keep so close to his style, as the author of the School Mistress, whose name I never knew, till you were so good as to inform me of it. I think it a charming poem; and was very much pleased with his ballad of Queen Elizabeth's seeing the milk-maid. She appears, at least in my humble imagination, in a more natural light, than when we hear of her bullying foreign powers, and cutting off the head of an unhappy Queen, who fled to her for protection. But to return to the Castle of Indolence; I believe it will afford you much entertainment; there are many pretty paintings in it, but I think the wizard's song deserves a preference.—"He needs no "muse who dictates from his heart." Have you met with two little volumes, which contain four Contemplations, writ-

ten by a Mr. James Hervey, a young Cornish or Devonshire clergyman? The subjects are upon walking among the Tombs, upon a Flower Garden, upon Night, and upon the Starry Heavens. There is something poetical and truly pious. Now I have got into the impertinence of recommending books to one who is a much better judge than myself, I must name an Essay on Delicacy,* a subject which, if I were not acquainted with you, and one or two more, I should imagine had no longer an existence upon our globe.

I sincerely sympathise in the pleasure which you must feel, dear Madam, from the extreme good character which every body gives of your son, and which his behaviour to you proves he deserves. May this, with every other blessing, be long continued to you, and may you always look upon me as a sincere though insignificant friend, as well as a most faithful and obedient, &c.

My Lord is at present in London, but I hope he will be here time enough to save the postage of this letter. I should be very glad to see any thing of Mr. Shenstone's.

LETTER CCXI.

Countess of Hertford to Lady Luxborough.

Percy-Lodge,
Dear Madam, Nov. 20, 1742.

I REMEMBER Mrs. Higgons used to say, Lady Clarendon had such a power over her understanding, that she might persuade her she was a fish. You have pretty near the same ascendant over mine, yet cannot quite convince me, that eight months is not an immoderate while to keep silence, and make a chasm in a correspondence with a friend, who incessantly wishes to hear of your health and happiness. I am not more easily seduced into an assent to your apology; for though I admire the beautiful language in which the fiction of your dulness is painted, I cannot mistake it for a truth. I am so bad at invention, that I will not search for an ingenious fable, to excuse myself for troubling you with an answer so soon, though my readiness to obey your commands, in subscribing for the prints you mention (if you will let me know where I must send for a receipt) might furnish me with one; but honestly own, that as my Lord has been in London since Thursday, I did not know how to employ the leisure hours his absence afforded me, more to my satisfaction.

We returned hither from Bath only Friday the eleventh: we were there two months, the last fortnight of which we were detained, after all our things were gone, by my poor Lord's having a fit of the gout: and I believe we came away rather too soon after it, for his limbs had not recovered their strength, so that he was terribly fatigued; however, he has now recovered it, and is certainly upon the whole infinitely the better for having drank the Bath waters. If I could envy you, dear Madam, I should be tempted to do it, for being in reach of Hagley, for having Mr. West for a neighbour, and Mr. Shenstone for a friend. He has obliged me so much, in letting me see his charming Ode upon Autumn, and the honour he does Mr. Thomson's memory in that poem, and in his design to erect an urn for him in Virgil's Grove, that I am sorry I cannot agree with him, in his dislike to autumn. On the contrary, I draw one motive of my partiality to it, from a similiar cause to what he partly ascribes his aversion; he hates it as a season which deprived him of a friend; I love it, because the latest days my heart could boast of happiness, in the best and most beloved of sons, were in that time of the year, till (as Dr. Young says)

—At Death's toll, whose restless, iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.

And then,

The clouds, the winds, the rains, the falling leaves,
The naked branches, the poor shiv'ring birds—

every thing around me seemed to sympathise in my distress, and still at every melancholy anniversary of my ever-to be-lamented loss, put on the same friendly appearance of social sorrow; and I may

* The Essay on Delicacy, here mentioned, was the production of Dr Nathaniel Lancaster, many years Rector of Stanford Rivers, near Ongar, in Essex.

may say with Myra, in her poem, before Mr. Thomson's first edition of the Seasons,

> To thee my gently-drooping head I bend,
> Thy sigh my sister, and thy tear my friend.

Forgive me, dear Madam, for thus continually returning to this afflicting subject; but two lines of Mr. Pope's, with the alteration only of one word, must plead my excuse:

> Of all affliction taught a *sufferer* yet,
> 'Tis sure the hardest science to forget.

I have done—and will now tell you, that our being obliged to go to Bath has hindered us from undertaking any thing here, so that I have nothing to talk of that is new, and I am afraid there was nothing here before that would make a tolerable figure, either in a print or a drawing; a flat can hardly look well upon paper, though in reality, the variety of woods and lawns, water, grass, and gravel, may produce a contrast not unpleasing to the eye. I am sorry you find any defects in Mr. Hervey; for both the design and manner of his writing please me extremely.

I want to know what you think of the Peruvian letters, and especially of the fifth in the suite. I have been very well entertained lately with the two first volumes of the Foundling*, written by Mr. Fielding, but not to be published till the 22d of January; if the same spirit runs through the whole work, I think it will be much preferable to Joseph Andrews. My Lord is absent from London, but I hope will be here time enough to free this letter, for I am sure it is not worth the postage. I am, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CCXII.

From the same to the same.

Piercy Lodge,
Dear Madam, June 17, 1749.

YOUR Ladyship bids me give you an account of what alterations we are making at present, but I feel myself much less able to describe the fabric and furniture of a palace than a hermitage, and while I am attending to all my Lord's designs there, I fancy I am no better acquainted with the effect it will produce, than a person would be with the beauty of a piece of tapestry, who saw only the wrong side of it. My Lord will do a good deal to the front of the house, in order to make it appear less like a prison: he builds a new wing on the right-hand side of the garden, which will contain a library, bed-chamber, dressing-room, and a writing-room. I think I told you that all the sashes, doors, and ceilings, in both apartments, must be entirely new, and the floors in my Lord's; the stair-case is very noble, but will require as large a lanthorn to light it, as that at Houghton, so much celebrated in the news-papers. The chimney pieces in both apartments are to be all new, and some of them very expensive; the draughts are mighty pretty. My Lord's bed on the ground-floor is crimson damask, with tapestry hangings; the next room is furnished with green damask, on purpose to set off his pictures; the next with a set of very fine old hangings of the Duke of Newcastle's horsemanship, with his own picture, on horseback, as big as life; and, now they are clean, looking neat, as when new. The parlour to be hung with some very good pictures: above stairs, the great waiting-room, with Saxon green cloth chairs, with gilt nails, and green lutestring window curtains, marble table, and large glass between the windows; first drawing-room, new crimson damask, with lutestring window curtains, two very fine Japan tables and glasses between the windows, with carved and gilt frames; inner drawing-room, tapestry hangings, with small figures, very pretty, and as fresh as new. He lays two rooms together in the right wing of the court, on the ground-floor, in order to make a chapel, with a Gothic wainscot, ceiling, and painted windows; there is to be a Dutch stove in it, which is so contrived, as to represent a tomb with an urn upon it. The court is to be paved, and the foot-way altered; and my Lord is in treaty for nine houses on the other side of the way, in order to pull them down and build stables (for there are none belong-

* The History of Tom Jones, by Henry Fielding, Esq.

ing to the house), whose gates are intended to open directly over against those of the court; if he can agree for this purchase he will widen the street in that part about eight feet. Now, dear Madam, I have obeyed you in the best manner I am able; but upon looking back into my letter, I find I have forgot my bed-chamber, dressing-room, and closet, which one would think, should not appear least interesting to myself; the first of these is to have a new bed-hanging, and chairs of crimson queen's damask; the dressing-room, which has two large sashes, will have tapestry hangings and green damask chairs; the closet, which is small, and has only one sash exactly facing the chimney, furnished with painted paper; the chimney-piece in the dressing-room, is to be of Statuary marble and *giallo di Sicring*, and just in the front of it, the fable of the stork inviting the fox to dinner, very neatly carved; there is another little waiting-room, at this end of the apartment, for the groom of the chambers to be in, in the morning, or, when I am not in form, in the evening. To return to my *bergerie*; nothing has been done in it this summer, nor have I the heart to propose any thing, for I am actually frightened with the sum my Lord is laying out about Northumberland-house; and I find, by living long in strait circumstances, one contracts a narrowness of mind, which makes launching out at once into great expence, not appear so desirable, as it would be thought by young, gay people. The cold north winds have blighted and ruined the beauty of my roses for the remainder of this year, and starved all the various flowers, which used to adorn our clumps and borders. The time of our going into Sussex remains unfixed; but I fancy it will be in about a month; and we have taken a new house in Bath, for the first week in September, so that instead of enjoying my peaceful shades, as I used to do, I appear engaged in a tedious pilgrimage, and am looking (over the charms of the summer month) to a resting place in Northumberland-House; and where, perhaps, I may never come, the probability is much stronger against me, than it was, this time five years, against my ever-lamented Beauchamp: and indeed I am far from well at present, having a most terrible cough and cold, with a continual head-ach and sickness at my stomach.

I am glad to hear that Mrs. Wool's seeming neglect did not proceed from her own heart, but the hardness of another's, which is a stranger to all that is gentle or humane. I am persuaded, your improvements will add great beauty to your habitation, and would make me long to see it, if I were a moveable being, but you know I never was fond of travelling, and I cannot take a journey now, but as the Rhodian Colossus might do. Among all my Lord's acquisitions, none has given me more pleasure than his chaplain, who is between sixty and seventy, very well bred, strictly pious, and they say is an admirable scholar; has a genius for all the polite arts, is a good judge of poetry, has read a prodigious deal, is very modest, and at the same time constantly cheerful, but naturally inclined to a solitary country life; in short we are all fond of his company, from my Lord to the lowest servant in the house. I am sure you are tired of my obedience by this time, and will be glad to see me come to a conclusion, by subscribing myself, dear Madam, your most faithful, &c.

LETTER CCXIII.

Dutchess of Somerset to Lady Luxborough.

Piercy-lodge,
Dear Madam, January 21, 1749-50.

When I look upon the date of your letter, it puts me both out of countenance and patience with myself. Your letter found me at Bath, from whence, I thank God, my Lord is returned with his health and appetite much improved; and I hope the good effects of this journey will continue longer than those of the preceding years. Our servants and goods have all been removed to Northumberland-House, since before Michaelmas, but when we shall get into it ourselves, is yet among the secrets of fate. It is still hid with scaffolds towards the street, but by the plan, and the little I could see of it when I was in London, on the King's birth-day, it will be very handsome, and indeed it should: my Lord destined ten thousand pounds for the alterations. but I believe he has by this time experienced that

that he deceived himself, at not setting it at above double; for though the house itself will not cost, perhaps, above fourteen thousand pounds, yet the houses he has purchased, in order to widen the street and build his stables, and the remainder of the Duke of Chandos's grant for Scotland-Yard, which he is in treaty for, in order to carry down his garden, and open a view from his house to the Thames, will cost at least as much more. Mean time, you may guess our poor *bergerie* has been neglected, and except a very pretty and convenient hot-house for pine-apples, has had no additional ornament of any kind. We pass this winter here, which I should not regret at any other time, but as Lady Betty* is to lie in, and is already gone a month past her reckoning, I should like to be nearer to her. I was not eight-and-forty hours in town, when I went to be pretented, on my Lord's new Earldoms, and to make my appearance on the birth-day; for I went from hence at seven on the Saturday morning, and was presented that day at noon, and on the Monday, as soon as the drawing-room was over, undressed and came back directly. I lay at Sir Hugh Smithson's, for I could not have a room at Northumberland-House, and I have never seen London since. We have the most glorious weather, that I believe was ever seen in winter; but, alas! I can only admire it from my windows, being under Dr. Shaw's hands, for the ill consequence of a fall, which I had before I went to Bath, by a servant heedlessly taking away a chair, just as I was going to sit down, and which I took too little care of at first, so I am now forbid all sort of exercise, which gives me but a melancholy prospect, as to my health, for the future: but God's will be done! and I hope I shall cheerfully submit to the event, whatever it be.

Have you seen a little French book called *Conseils à une Amie*, said to be written by Madame de Pompadour? The name of the author will not induce you to expect any very exalted sentiments of religion or morality: but it contains good rules for making a proper figure in high-life. I have also had the letters of Monsieur Racine le Pere, and some memoirs of his life, by his son, lent me; and they give me a greater esteem for him as a man, than as the author of *Esther* and *Athaliah*. I hope you have seen my old acquaintance, the minister of B—'s answer to Dr. Middleton's *Free Enquiry about Miracles*. I cannot imagine how he can reply to it, without owning himself a deist, or explaining some of his innuendos in a different way to what they appear at first sight. Mr. and Mrs. Wymondesold's handsome behaviour to you, dear Madam, gives me a good opinion of them both. I believe I shall never have reason to alter that which I have formed of my Lord L— for some years past; and as to that I strove to entertain of him before, it was the work of art, and a *contre-cœur*. As to your son, I think he does not act of himself. I am sorry to hear Mr. Shenstone has been so ill, but I hope his Muse has not left him; I am sure yours has not; I am confident she attended you very agreeably upon his bench. Mr. Lindsey, my Lord's chaplain, (who by the way is a very good judge, and a pretty sort of man) prefers his Ode on Autumn to almost every modern performance. My Lord sends you his compliments; and I am, with a very sincere regard, dear Madam, your Ladyship's most obliged and faithful humble servant.

The first of the inclosed verses are said to have been written by a gentleman in New England; the second by Mr. Marsham. If you have not seen them, I hope they will serve for a minute's amusement.

* The late Dutchess of Northumberland.

LETTER CCXIV.

From the same to the same.

Piercy-Lodge,
Dear Madam, December 31, 1751.

APOLOGIES between friends appear so unnecessary, that if you have still the same inclination which you have formerly shewn to look upon me in the light, you will never again treat me with the ceremony of a formal acquaintance: when you write to me, you give me pleasure; when you do not, I love my own peace too well to fancy you are angry with me while I am not conscious of my deserving to have you so. You see I do not regu-

late my correspondence as poor Lady—did her visits: which she never was to return sooner than her former ones had been repaid.

I am not in the least surprised that you were pleased to return to the venerable seat of your ancestors, and the abode of your first and happiest days: and find nothing trivial or childish in the satisfaction you felt, in seeing old faces full of gratitude for obligations long since past, and by you, perhaps, forgot: or in recalling some little lively incidents in the earliest and innocent hours of youth. As for the wise and witty of the present age, I know not what they would say, and I do not design to hear it; they will scarce visit my hermitage, and I shall not leave it to visit them. I hope to dispose of my house in Downing-street, which I would not do, if I ever intended to pass six weeks in London, for I am fond of the situation. But I find myself happiest in the retreat which my dear Lord's unmerited beneficence has made me mistress of, and fixed my home upon the spot of earth I would have chosen for myself. Every thing both within and without the house, reminds me of my obligations to him: and I cannot turn my eyes upon any object, which is not an object of his goodness to me. The satisfaction I take in adding either beauty or convenience to my habitation, is greatly enhanced by the reflection, that while I am adorning it, I at the same time can shew my value for the gift, and my gratitude to the lamented giver.

I have a regular, and, I hope, a religious family. My woman, though she has not lived with me quite three years, had before lived twenty-three betwixt Lord Grantham's and Lady Cowper's; my house-keeper has been a servant as long: the person who takes in my accounts, pays the bills, and overlooks the men within doors, has been in the family nineteen years: and the other, who has lived ten, has the care of the stables, and every thing without. I rise at seven, but do not go down till nine, when the bell rings, and my whole family meet me at chapel; after prayers, we go to breakfast; any friend who happens to be there, myself, and my chaplain, have ours in the little library; the rest in their respective eating rooms. About eleven, if the weather permits, we go to walk in the park, or take the air in the coach; but if it be too bad for either, we return to our various occupations. At three we dine: sit perhaps near an hour afterwards; then separate, till we meet at eight for prayers; after which we adjourn again to the library, where somebody reads aloud, unless some stranger comes who chooses cards, until half an hour past nine, when we sup, and always part before eleven. This to the fine world would sound a melancholy monastic life: and I cannot be supposed to have chosen it from my ignorance of the splendour and gaiety of a court, but from a thorough experience that they can give no solid happiness; and I find myself more calmly pleased in my present way of living, and more truly contented, than I ever was in the bloom and pomp of my youth. I am no longer dubious what point to pursue. There is but one proper for the decline of life, and indeed the only one worth the anxiety of a rational creature at any age: but how do the fire of youth and flattery of the world blind our eyes, and mislead our fancies, after a thousand imaginary pleasures, which are sure to disappoint us in the end!

I condole with you for the loss of Mr. Price, as a faithful servant is always a valuable possession.

Mr. Shenstone does me a great deal of honour in inscribing his Ode upon Rural Elegance to me. I am persuaded he is master of the subject, for I have heard from people who saw his gardens not long ago, that they are the most perfect model of it.

I dare say, Lady Northumberland did not know how near she was to you, or she would not have passed by, without inquiring after you. The news-papers will inform you, that her Lord supplies the place of Lord Waldegrave, in the King's bed chamber. Their children, I mean the two youngest, were both here, while they made their Warwick and Staffordshire tour, and also till they came from Bath. The little boy is called Algernoon, after his grand-papa; and is, though less handsome, the counterpart of his poor uncle, Lord Beauchamp; his innocence, his temper, and his voice, are just the same, and every motion of his body: judge if I am fond of him.

Books you wish me to name. You have undoubtedly read Voltaire's Siecle

de Louis, and Madame Maintenon's Letters; I have been entertained with both; he informs the head; she, I think, instructs, and may reform, the heart. I often regret that I had not seen her writings thirty years ago. I have seen nothing in the Genie of Cecile, except *la laide aimable*, which I think are pretty. But as for Jenny Jessamy, Betty Barnes, and their compeers. I never buy any of them, though I have looked over the two last I have named, in their passage between Lady Northumberland and Mrs. Kingdon. I hope you will prevail with Mr. Shenstone to let me see his Ode. There are some particulars in Archbishop Tillotson's Life, that may amuse you, and a dialogue upon Beauty, by Sir Harry Beaumont; these are the only new things I have seen. I have hardly room to subscribe myself, dear Madam, ever faithfully yours.

I wish you as many happy years as you wish yourself.

LETTER CCXV.

Dutchess of Somerset to W. Shenstone, Esq.

Piercy-Lodge, near Colnebrook,
Sir, Nov. 20, 1753.

If Lady Luxborough has not been so just as to let you know, that she never conveyed your two excellent poems to my hand till last Saturday night, you must look upon me as the most ungrateful and tasteless of all mortals. I have read them both over more than once with pleasure; but will it not appear strange, if I confess to you, that the honour you have done me by the inscription of the first, and a stanza or two in the poem itself, has given me some pain? And I shall look upon it as a very great addition to the favour, if whenever my name, or that of Piercy-Lodge occurs, you will have the Goodness to fill the blank (which leaving out those words must occasion) with stars, dashes, or any other mark you please, without suspecting me of an affected or false modesty, since to either of these accusations I can honestly plead not guilty. The idea you have formed of my character, you have taken from a partial friend, whose good-nature may have (and in this case certainly has) warped her judgement. The world in general, since they can find no fault in your poem, will blame the choice of the person to whom it was inscribed, and draw mortifying comparisons betwixt the ideal Lady and the real one. But I have a more impartial judge to produce, than either my friend or the world, and that is my own heart, which though it may flatter me I am not quite so faulty as the latter would represent me, at the same time loudly admonishes me, that I am still further from the valuable person Lady Luxborough has drawn you in to suppose me.

I hope you will accept these reasons as the genuine and most serious sentiments of my mind, which indeed they are, though accompanied with the most grateful sense of the honour you designed me.

I cannot help mentioning another copy of verses of yours, which, if it is not already printed, I hope you will permit Mr. Dodsley to add to his new collection, and that is Damon's Bower, occasioned by the death of Mr. Thomson. If you should have mislaid the original, I have a copy at your service, which I will transmit either to you, in case you should have a mind to look it over again, or transmit it directly to Mr. Dodsley.

I am with unfeigned esteem and gratitude, Sir, your most obliged, &c.

LETTER CCXVI.

Dutchess of Somerset to Lady Luxborough
Piercy-Lodge, Nov. 23, 1753.

I did, dear Madam, begin to despair of having the honour, and (what I felt more sensibly) the pleasure, of hearing from you again. I am so subject to fall into errors, that I was afraid some unguarded expression in my last letter might have given you offence, and yet my heart bore witness, how far I had been from intending it.

I have been extremely ill the whole summer, and for some weeks believed in great danger; but by the blessing of God upon Dr. Shaw's prescriptions, I am at present, though lean and ill-favoured, much better; yet still obliged to be carried up and down stairs, for want of strength and breath to carry myself: but I have great reason to bless God for the ease I now enjoy. When one comes to the last broken arches of Mirza's bridge, rest from pain must bound our ambition, for pleasure is not to be expected in this world;

world: where I have no more a notion of laying schemes to be executed six months, than I have six years hence; which, I believe, helps to keep my spirits in an even state of cheerfulness to enjoy the satisfactions which present themselves, without anxious solicitude about their duration. We have lived to an age that necessarily shews the earth crumbling under our feet, and as our journey seems approaching towards the verge of life, it is not more natural to cast our eyes to the prospect beyond it, than, by a retrospective view, to recall the troublesome trifles that ever made our road difficult or dangerous: Methinks it would be imitating Lot's wife (whose history is not recorded as an example for us to follow), to want to look back to the miserable scene we are so near escaping from.

I have spent the last three weeks most agreeably. The first of them the Bishop of Oxford and Mr. Talbot passed with us, and had the goodness to leave Miss Talbot (whose character I think you must have heard) when they went away. She is all the world has said of her, as to an uncommon share of understanding; but she has other charms, which I imagine you will join with me in giving the preference even to that; a mild and equal temper, an unaffected pious heart, and the most universal good will to her fellow-creatures, that ever I knew. She censures nobody, she despises nobody, and whilst her own life is a pattern of goodness, she does not exclaim with bitterness against vice. We spend a good deal of our time in our own rooms, except in the mornings, but our time is a good deal broken in upon. Soon after nine we meet in the chapel; as soon as prayers are over, we go to breakfast, and after that we work, during which, Mr. Cowslad, or my chaplain, read aloud; at eleven we go, if the weather is tolerable, to take the air for two hours at least, which Dr. Shaw insists upon my doing. The moment we get out of the coach, we see no more of one another till three, when the dinner is punctually upon the table. Dinner and tea are both over by five, when we retire till eight, and then go to prayers; after which we adjourn into the little library, were we work, and the gentlemen read, as in the morning, till supper, a quarter before ten, and it is a rule to be all in our rooms a quarter before eleven.

We are at present very highly entertained with the History of Sir Charles Grandison, which is so vastly above Pamela or Clarissa, that I shall not be easy till you have read it, and sent me your sentiments upon it. Miss Talbot received Lady Gray's [*somewhat omitted, perhaps some remarks on Grandison*] in a letter of six sides, wrote with the greatest good sense and vivacity imaginable. I fancy she is an excellent and agreeable young woman.

It is now more than time to return you thanks for the trouble you have taken in conveying Mr. Shenstone's admirable poem* to me. I have wrote to him this post, and could not do it sooner, because his letter was only dated Leasowes, and could not find out his post-town, without sending to Mrs. Stanley, whom I do not visit, and who lives twelve miles from me. I have expressed my gratitude in the best manner I am able; but am under the necessity of declining the honour he intended me, and have begged him to fill up the blanks with stars, or what he pleases, whenever my name, or that of Piercy-Lodge, was designed, and I hope he will oblige me.

You say, you have been in a lethargy. Dear Madam, this must have proceeded from some oppression upon your spirits, for which I have known tar-water to be a sovereign remedy, and wish you would try it. Poor Mrs. Ward! But since we can say nothing to her honour, let us not expatiate upon her disgrace.

Any thing directed to be left with William Philips, my porter, in Downing-street, will be sent to me directly.

I am, dear Madam, your Ladyship's most obliged and obedient servant.

LETTER CCXVII.

Dutchess of Somerset to Lady Luxborough.

Piercy-Lodge.

Dear Madam, Feb. 25, 1754.

PRAY never think excuse can be necessary to me about exactness in answering my letters; I am always glad to hear from you when it is agreeable to you to write, but am not one of those over-kind friends who are for ever out of

* Rural Elegance, inscribed to the writer of this letter.

humour

humour with those whom they rather enthrall than oblige, by giving them that name. As a proof I never wish to act so by my friends, or am afraid of being treated so by them, I will own to you, I am not quite sure I should have answered your last letter so soon, were it not that I am under serious concern to find how awkwardly I must have expressed myself to Mr. Shenstone, if I gave him room to believe I harboured a secret wish to have so fine a poem as his Ode suppressed. On the contrary, I should think myself guilty of a very great crime and injustice to the public, if I were to be the means of depriving them of so charming and rational an entertainment. I gave him the true reasons in my letter, for desiring that my own name nor that of my humble yet peaceful dwelling, might be inserted. You know I always envied the lot of "*la vislette, qui se cache sous "l'herbe.*"

It is true, my dear Lady Luxborough, times are changed with us, since no walk was long enough, or exercise painful enough, to hurt us, as we childishly imagined: yet after a ball or masquerade, have we not come home very well contented to pull off our ornaments and fine clothes, in order to go to rest? Such methinks is the reception we naturally give to the warnings of our bodily decays; they seem to undress us by degrees, to prepare us for a rest that will refresh us far more powerfully than any night's sleep could do. We shall then find no weariness from the fatigues which either our bodies or our minds have undergone; but all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and sorrow, and crying, and pains, shall be no more; we shall then without weariness move in our new vehicles, transport ourselves from one part of the skies to another, with much more ease and velocity, than we could have done in the prime of our strength, upon the fleetest horses, the distance of a mile. This cheerful prospect enables us to see our strength fail, and await the tokens of our approaching dissolution with a kind of awful pleasure. I will ingenuously own to you, dear Madam, that I experience more true happiness in the retired manner of life that I have embraced, than I ever knew from all the splendour or flatteries of the world. There was always a void; they could not satisfy a rational mind: and at the most heedless time of my youth, I well remember, that I always looked forward with a kind of joy, to a decent retreat, when the evening of life should make it practicable.

Boadicea I have read; there is an interesting scene or two in it; but there is something wanting in the management of the drama to keep up the spirits of the audience. Philoclea I have not seen, nor have heard such a character of it as to raise my curiosity. If you have not read Deformity, an Essay, by Mr. Hay, nor his *Religio Philosophi* (I do not know how that last word should end), I believe they will entertain you very well in their different ways. The Adventurer will soon be published in volumes, and will be very well worth buying. I doubt I must agree with Mr. Shenstone, that the style of Sir Charles Grandison is too prolix, and yet I do not know any of it I should be willing to part with, except Harriet Byron's conversation with the Oxonian, in the first volume, and the preparations and entertainments at Sir Charles's wedding in the fifth.

When I came home from taking the air on Friday, I was very agreeably surprised to find Lady Northumberland ready to receive me, as I had no notion of her coming. She had been alarmed with a false report, that I had not been so well for some days as she left me. I took the opportunity of shewing her your letter, and she desired me to make her compliments to your Ladyship, and tell you, she keeps no servant about Lady Elizabeth, while she is at school, and at her return will think it necessary to have a person of a middle age about her. Such a one she now has about her little boy; a pretty sort of woman, who speaks French and English equally well, is grave and properly behaved, and, I believe, hopes for Lady Elizabeth's place, when her little angel of a master goes into the hands of the men. His mamma took him away with her on Saturday, after lending him to me for a month (though she is excessively fond of him), because she sees he is the joy of my life. He has some faint resemblance (though not a good one) of his poor uncle; but his openness and mildness of temper are the very same. Her eldest boy too is a very sensible and good one. He and Lady Greville dine with me from Eton every

every Sunday; they are here at present for two or three days, on account of their being holidays. I have hardly left myself room to make Mr. Cowslad's compliments, and subscribe myself, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CCXVIII.

Countess of Hertford to Dr. Burnet, occasioned by some Meditations the Doctor sent her, upon the Death of her Son, Lord Beauchamp.

Sir,

I AM very sensibly obliged by the kind compassion you express for me, under my heavy affliction. The meditations you have furnished me with, afford the strongest motives for consolation that can be offered to a person under my unhappy circumstances. The dear lamented son I have lost, was the pride and joy of my heart; but I hope I may be the more easily excused for having looked on him in this light, since he was not so from the outward advantages he possessed, but from the virtues and rectitude of his mind. The prospects which flattered me, in regard to him, were not drawn from his distinguished rank, or from the beauty of his person, but from the hopes that his example would have been serviceable to the cause of virtue, and would have shewn the younger part of the world, that it was possible to be cheerful without being foolish or vicious, and to be religious without severity or melancholy. His whole life was one uninterrupted course of duty and affection to his parents; and, when he found the hand of death upon him, his only regret was to think on the agonies which must rend their hearts; for he was perfectly content to leave the world, as his conscience did not reproach him with any presumptuous sins, and he hoped his errors would be forgiven. Thus he resigned his innocent soul into the hands of his merciful Creator, on the evening of his birth-day, which completed him nineteen. You will not be surprised, Sir, that the death of such a son should occasion the deepest sorrow; yet, at the same time it leaves us the most comfortable assurance, that he is happier than our fondest wishes and care could have made him, which must enable us to support the remainder of years, which it shall please God to allot for us here, without murmuring or discontent, and quicken our endeavours to prepare ourselves to follow to that happy place, where our dear valuable child is gone before us. I beg the continuance of your prayers, and am, Sir, your, &c.

Epistolarum Sylloge:

OR,

ELEGANT EPISTLES

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION I.

FROM THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM SHENSTONE, Esq. AND Mr. GRAY, TO AND FROM THEIR FRIENDS.

LETTER I.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend.

From Mr. Wintle's, Perfumer, near Temple-Bar, &c.

Dear Sir, 6th Feb. 1740.

I AM now, with regard to the town, pretty much in the same state in which I expect to be always with regard to the world; sometimes exclaiming and railing against it: sometimes giving it a good word, and even admiring it. A sunshiny-day, a tavern-supper after a play well-acted, and now and then an invigorating breath of air in the Mall, never fail of producing a cheerful effect. I do not know whether I gave you any account of Quin's acting Falstaff in my former letter; I really imagined that I saw you tittering on one side me, shaking your sides, and sometimes scarce containing yourself. You will pardon the attitude in which I placed you, since it was what seemed natural at that circumstance of time—Comus I have once been at, for the sake of the songs, though I detest it in any light; but as a dramatic piece, the taking of it seems a prodigy; yet indeed such a one, as was pretty tolerably accounted for by a gentleman who sat by me in the boxes. This learned sage, being asked how he liked the play, made answer, "He could not tell "—pretty well, he thought—or indeed "as well as any other play—he always "took it, that people only came there "to see and to be seen—for as for what "was said, he owned, he never under-"stood any thing of the matter." I told him, I thought a great many of its admirers were in his case, if they would but own it.

On the other hand, it is amazing to consider to what an universality of learning people make pretensions here. There is not a drawer, a chair or hackney coachman, but is politician, poet, and judge of polite literature. Chimney-sweepers damn the convention, and black-shoe-boys cry up the genius of Shakespeare. "The Danger of writing "Verse" is a very good thing; if you have not read it, I would recommend it to you as poetical. But now I talk of learning, I must not omit an interview which I accidentally had the other night in company with Lord D—— and one Mr. C——. We were taken to sup at a private house where I found a person whom

I have

I had never seen before. The man behaved exceeding modestly and well; till, growing a little merry over a bottle (and being a little countenanced by the subject we were upon,) he pulls out of his pocket about half a dozen ballads, and distributes them amongst the company. I (not finding at first they were of his own composition read one over, and, finding it a dull piece of stuff, contented myself with observing that it was exceedingly well printed. But to see the man's face on this occasion would make you pity the circumstance of an author as long as you live. His jollity ceased (as a flame would do, should you pour water upon it;) and, I believe, for about five minutes, he spoke not a syllable. At length recovering himself, he began to talk about his country-seat, about Houghton-Hall, and soon after desired a health, imagining (as I found afterwards) that Lord D—would have given Sir Robert's. But he did not, naming Sir T—L—: mine, which followed, was that of Mr. L—. Now, who do you think this should be, but honest Ralph Freeman (at least the writer of the paper so subscribed,) your father's old friend and intimate, Sir Robert's right-hand, a person that lives elegantly, drives six of the best horses in town, and plays on St. John's organ (you know Mr. L— is not only Sir Robert's greatest enemy, but the Gazetteer's proper antagonist.) We were invited to see him very civilly, and indeed the man behaved with the utmost good-humour, without arrogance, or any attempts at wit, which probably would not have been very successful.—Ask your father what he would say to me, if I should join in the cause with his old friend, and take a good annuity under Sir Robert, which, I believe, I might have, and little encouragement, God knows, have I met with on the other side of the question. I say, I believe I might have, because I know a certain person gives pensions of three pounds a-week to porters and the most illiterate stupid fellows you can imagine, to talk in his behalf at ale-houses; where they sit so long a time, and are as regularly relieved as one centry relieves another.—At least tell him that I expect in his answer to my letter (which I shall not allow him to assign to you,) he write something to confirm me in my integrity, and to make me prefer him, and you, and honesty, to lace, brocade, and the smiles of the ladies.

Et Veneri, & cunis, & plumis Sardanapali.

But I hope to keep my Hercules in view, whether in print or manuscript; and though I am as fond of pleasure as most people, yet I shall observe the rule

Positam sic tangere noli.

I desire I may hear from you next post: I have a line or two, which I intend for the sons of utter darkness (as you call them) next magazine: I would send them to you, for your advice, but cannot readily find them. I like every thing in Mr. Somervile's, but the running of the last line. I think to insert them. Should be glad to have a line or two of yours, that one may make a bold attack. I look on it as fun, without the least emotion, I assure you. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER II.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago, on the Death of his Father.

Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Jago, Aug. 28, 1740.

I FIND some difficulty in writing to you on this melancholy occasion. No one can be more unfit to attempt to lessen your grief than myself, because no one has a deeper sense of the cause of your affliction. Though I would by no means be numbered by you amongst the common herd of your acquaintance that tell you they are sorry, yet it were impertinent in me to mention a mere friend's concern to a person interested by so many more tender regards. Besides, I should be glad to alleviate your sorrow, and such sort of condolence tends but little to promote that end. I do not chuse to flatter you; neither could I, more especially at this time; but though I could perhaps find enough to say to persons of less sense than you, I know of nothing but what your own reason must have suggested. Concern indeed may have suspended the power of that faculty; and upon that pretence, I have a few things that I would suggest to you. After all, it is time alone that can and will cure all afflictions and such as are the consequence

of

of vice; and yours, I am sure proceeds from a contrary principle.

I heard accidentally of this sorrowful event, and accompanied you to London with the utmost concern. I wished it was in my power to mitigate your griefs by sharing them, as I have often found it in yours to augment my pleasure by so doing.

All that I can recommend to you is, not to confine your eye to any single event in life, but to take in your whole circumstances before you repine.

When you reflect that you have lost one of the best of men in a father, you ought to comfort yourself that you had such a father; to whom I cannot forbear applying these lines from Milton:

——"Since to part!
"Go, heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger!
"Sent by whose sovereign goodness we adore!
"Gentle to me and affable has been
"Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
"With grateful'st memory——"
End of Book VIII. PAR. LOST.

I would have you by all means come over hither as soon as you can. I will endeavour to render the time you spend here as satisfactory as it is in my power: and I hope you will ever look upon me as your hearty friend, through all the vicissitudes of life.

Pray give my humble service to Mrs. Jago and your brother. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Reynolds.

Dear Sir, Leasowes, Aug. 1740.

WONDERFUL were the dangers and difficulties through which I went, the night I left you at Barels; which I looked upon as ordained by fate for the temporal punishment of obstinacy. It was very kind, and in character, for you to endeavour to deter me from the ways of darkness; but having a sort of penchant for needless difficulties, I have an undoubted right to indulge myself in them so long as I do not insist upon any one's pity. It is true, these ought not to exceed a certain degree: they should be *lenia tormenta*; and I must own the labour I underwent that night did not come within the bounds which my imagination had prescribed. I cannot forbear mentioning one imminent danger. I rode along a considerable piece of water, covered so close with trees, that it was as probable I might have pursued the channel, which was dangerous, as my way out of it. Or, to put my case in a more poetical light, having by night intruded upon an amour betwixt a Wood-nymph and a River-god, I owned my escape to Fortune, who conveyed me from the vengeance which they might have taken. I put up finally at a little alehouse about ten o'clock, and lay all night awake, counting the cords which supported me, which I could more safely swear to than to either bed or blanket. For farther particulars, see my epistle to the Pastor Fido of Lapworth. Mr. Graves says, he should be glad to shew you any civilities in his power, upon his own acquaintance; and will serve you as far as his vote goes, upon my recommendation; but is afraid, without the concurrence of some more considerable friends, your chance will be but small this year, &c. If the former part of this news gives you any pleasure, I assure you it gives me no less to communicate it; and this pleasure proceeds from a principle which would induce me to serve you myself if it should ever be in my power. I saw Mr Lyttleton last week: he is a candidate for the county of Worcester, together with Lord Deerhurst; I hope Mr. Somervile will do him the honour to appear as his friend, which he must at least think second to that of succeeding.

I hear you are commenced chaplain since I saw you. I wish you joy of it. The chaplain's title is infinitely more agreeable than his office; and I hope the scarf, which is expressive of it, will be no diminutive thing, no four-penny-half-penny piece of ribboning; but that it will

"High o'er the neck its rustling folds display,
"Disdain all usual bounds, extend its sway,
"Usurp the head, and push the wig away."

I hope it will prove ominous, that my first letter is a congratulatory one; and if I were to have opportunities of sending all such, it would entirely quadrate with the sincere wishes of your, &c.

I beg my compliments to Mr. Somervile, Mrs. Knight, and your family.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. ——, on his taking Orders in the Church.

Dear Sir, Leasowes, June 8, 1741.

I WRITE to you out of the abundant inclination I have to hear from you; imagining that, as you gave me a direction, you might possibly expect to receive a previous letter from me. I want to be informed of the impressions you receive from your new circumstances. The chief aversion which some people have to orders is, what I fancy you will remove in such as you converse with. I take it to be owing partly to dress, and partly to the avowed profession of religion. A young clergyman, that has distinguished his genius by a composition or two of a polite nature, and is capable of dressing himself and his religion in a different manner from the generality of his profession, that is, without formality, is certainly a genteel character. I speak this not with any sly design to advise, but to intimate that I think you very capable of shining in a dark-coloured coat. You must consider me yet as a man of the world, and endeavouring to elicit that pleasure from gaiety which my reason tells me I shall never find. It is impossible to express how stupid I have been ever since I came home, insomuch that I cannot write a common letter without six repetitions. This is the third time I have begun yours, and you see what stuff it is made up of. I must e'en hasten to matter of fact, which is the comfortable resource of dull people, though, even as to that, I have nothing to communicate. But I would be glad to know, whether you are under a necessity of residing on week days; and, if not, why I may not expect you a day or two at the Leasowes very soon? Did you make any inquiry concerning the number of my poems sold at Oxford? or did you hear any thing concerning it that concerns me to hear?—Will S—— (for that is his true name) is the excess of simplicity and good-nature. He seems to have all the industry imaginable to divert and amuse people, without any ambitious ends to serve, or almost any concern whether he has so much as a laugh allowed to his stories, any further than as a laugh is an indication that people are delighted. This, joined with his turn of thought, renders him quite agreeable. I wish it were in my power to conciliate acquaintance with half his ease. Pray do not delay writing to me. Adieu.

LETTER V.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend, expressing his dissatisfaction at the manner of life in which he is engaged.

Dear Sir, 1741.

I WONDER I have not heard from you lately—of you indeed I have, from Mr. W—. If you could come over, probably, I might go back with you for a day or two; for my horse, I think, gets rather better, and may, with indulgence, perform such a journey. I want to advise with you about several matters:—to have your opinion about a building that I have built, and about a journey which I design to Bath; and about numberless things, which, as they are numberless, cannot be comprehended in this paper. I am, your, &c.

Now I am come home from a visit—every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce my whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life I now lead, and the life which I foresee I shall lead. I am angry, and envious, and dejected, and frantic, and disregard all present things, just as becomes a madman to do. I am infinitely pleased (though it is a gloomy joy) with the application of Dr. Swift's complaint, "that he is forced to "die in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a "hole." My soul is no more suited to the figure I make, than a cable rope to a cambric needle:—I cannot bear to see the advantages alienated, which I think I could deserve and relish so much more than those that have them. Nothing can give me patience but the soothing sympathy of a friend, and that will only turn my rage into simple melancholy.—I believe soon I shall bear to see nobody. I do hate all hereabouts already, except one or two. I will have my dinner brought upon my table in my absence, and the plates fetched away in my absence; and nobody shall see me: for I

can

can never bear to appear in the same stupid mediocrity for years together, and gain no ground. As Mr. G —— complained to me (and, I think, you too, both unjustly), "I am no character."—I have in my temper some rakishness, but it is checked by want of spirits: some solidity, but it is softened by vanity! some esteem of learning, but it is broke in upon by laziness, imagination, and want of memory, &c.—I could reckon up twenty things throughout my whole circumstances wherein I am thus tantalized. Your fancy will present them.—Not that all I say here will signify to you: I am only under a fit of dissatisfaction, and to grumble does me good—only excuse me, that I cure myself at your expence. Adieu!

LETTER VI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr.——, with an Invitation to accompany him to Town.

Dear Sir, The Leasowes, Nov. 25, 1741.

THE reason why I write to you so suddenly is, that I have a proposal to make to you. If you could contrive to be in London for about a month from the end of December, I imagine you would spend it agreeably enough along with me, Mr. Outing, and Mr. Whistler. According to my calculations, we should be a very happy party at a play, coffee-house, or tavern. Do not let your supercilious friends come in upon you with their prudential maxims. Consider you are now of the proper age for pleasure, and have not above four or five whimsical years left. You have not struck one bold stroke yet, that I know of. Saddle your mule, and let us be jogging to the great city. I will be answerable for amusement.—Let me have the pleasure of seeing you in the pit, in a laughter as cordial and singular as your friendship.—— Come—let us go forth into the opera-house; let us hear how the eunuch-folk sing. Turn your eye upon the lilies and roses, diamonds and rubies; the Belindas and the Sylvias of gay life! Think upon Mrs. Clive's inexpressible comicalness; not to mention Hippesley's joke-abounding physiognomy! Think, I say, now; for the time cometh when you shall say, "I have no pleasure in them."

I am conscious of much merit in bringing about the interview betwixt Mr. L——and Mr. S——; but merit, as Sir John Falstaff says, is not regarded in these coster-monger days.

Pray now do not write me word that your business will not allow you ten minutes in a fortnight to write to me; an excuse fit for none but a cobbler, who has ten children dependent upon a waxen thread. Adieu.

LETTER VII.

From the same to the same.

My good friend, 1741.

OUR old friend Somervile is dead! I did not imagine I could have been so sorry as I find myself on this occasion—"*Sublatum quærimus.*" I can now excuse all his foibles; impute them to age and to distress of circumstances; the last of these considerations wrings my very soul to think on. For a man of high spirit, conscious of having (at least in one production) generally pleased the world, to be plagued and threatened by wretches that are low in every sense; to be forced to drink himself into pains of the body in order to get rid of the pains of the mind; is a misery which I can well conceive, because I may, without vanity, esteem myself his equal in point of œconomy, and consequently ought to have an eye on his misfortunes: (as you kindly hinted to me about twelve o'clock at the Feathers) I should retrench;—I will; but you shall not see me:—I will not let you know that I took your hint in good part. I will do it at solitary times, as I may; and yet there will be some difficulty in it; for whatever the world might esteem in poor Somervile, I really find, upon critical inquiry, that I loved him for nothing so much as his flocci-nauci-nihili-pili-fication of money.

Mr. A—— was honourably acquitted: Lord A——, who was present, and behaved very insolently they say, was hissed out of court. They proved his application to the carpenter's son, to get him to swear against Mr. A—, though the boy

was proved to have said in several companies (before he had been kept at Lord A—'s house that he was sure the thing was accidental. Finally, it is believed he will recover the title of A—ea.

The apprehension of the whores, and the suffocation of four in the round-house by the stupidity of the keeper, engrosses the talk of the town. The said house is re-building every day (for the mob on Sunday night demolished it), and re-demolished it every night. The Duke of M—gh, J—— S—— his brother, Lord C— G—, were taken into the round-house, and confined from eleven at night till eleven next day: I am not positive of the Duke of M—gh; the others are certain; and that a large number of people of the first fashion went from the round-house to De Veil's, to give in informations of their usage. The justice himself seems greatly scared; the prosecution will be carried on with violence, so as probably to hang the keeper, and there is an end.

Lord Bath's coachman got drunk and tumbled from his box, and he was forced to borrow Lord Orford's. Wits say, that it was but gratitude for my Lord Orford's coachman to drive my Lord Bath, as my Lord Bath himself had driven my Lord Orford. Thus they.

I have ten million things to tell you; though they all amount to no more than that I wish to please you, and that I am your sincere friend and humble servant.

I am pleased that I can say I knew Mr. Somervile, which I am to thank you for.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on Benevolence and Friendship.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Graves, Jan. 19, 1741-2.

I CANNOT forbear immediately writing to you: the pleasure your last letter gave me, put it out of my power to restrain the overflowings of my benevolence. I can easily conceive that, upon some extraordinary instances of friendship, my heart might be *si fort attendri*, that I could not bear any restraint upon my ability to shew my gratitude. It is an observation I made upon reading to-day's paper, which cantains an account of C. Khevenhuller's success in favour of the Queen of Hungary. To think what sublime affection must influence that poor unfortunate Queen, should a faithful and zealous General revenge her upon her enemies, and restore her ruined affairs!

Had a person shewn an esteem and affection for me, joined with any elegance or without any elegance, in the expression of it, I should have been in acute pain till I had given some sign of my willingness to serve him. From all this, I conclude that I have more humanity than some others.

Probably enough I shall never meet with a larger share of happiness than I feel at present. If not, I am thoroughly convinced, my pain is greatly superior to my pleasure. That pleasure is not absolutely dependent on the mind, I know from this, that I have enjoyed happier scenes in the company of some friends than I can possibly at present;—but alas! all the time you and I shall enjoy together, abstracted from the rest of our lives, and lumped, will not perhaps amount to a solid year and a half. How small a proportion!

People will say to one that talks thus, "Would you die?" To set the case upon a right footing, they must take away the hopes of greater happiness in this life, the fears of greater misery hereafter, together with the bodily pain of dying, and address me in a disposition betwixt mirth and melancholy; and I could easily resolve them.

I do not know how I am launched out so far into this complaint: it is, perhaps, a strain of constitutional whining; the effect of the wind—did it come from the winds? to the winds will I deliver it:

> "*Tradam protervis in mare Creticum,*
> "*Portare ventis—*"

I will be as happy as my fortune will permit, and make others so;

> "*Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis*
> "*Arbor æstiva recreatur aura——*"

I will be so. The joke, is that the description which you gave of that country was, that you had few trees about you; so that I shall trick fortune if she should

should grant my petition implicity. But, in earnest, I intend to come and stay a day or two with you next summer.

Mr. Whistler is at Mr. Gosling's, bookseller, at the Mitre and Crown, in Fleet-street, and inquired much after you in his last letter to me. He writes to me; but I believe his affection for one weighs less with him while the town is in the other scale; though he is very obliging. I do not know whether I do right, when I say I believe we three, that is, in solitary circumstances, have an equal idea of, and affection for, each other. I say, supposing each to be alone, or in the country, which is nearly the same; for scenes alter minds as much as the air influences bodies. For instance, when Mr. Whistler is in town, I suppose we love him better than he does us; and when we are in town, I suppose the same may be said in regard to him.

The true burlesque of Spenser (whose characteristic is simplicity) seems to consist in a simple representation of such things as one laughs to see or to observe one's self, rather than in any monstrous contrast betwixt the thoughts and words, I cannot help thinking that my added stanzas have more of his manner than what you saw before, which you are not a judge of till you have read him.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, 1743.

I LONG heartily to talk over affairs with you *téte-á-téte*; but am an utter enemy to the fatigue of transcribing what might pass well enough in conversation. I shall say nothing more concerning my departure from L—, than that it was necessary, and therefore excusable.—I have been since with a gentleman upon the borders of Wales, Bishop's Castle, from whence I made a digression one day beyond Offa's Dyke; saw mountains which converted all that I had seen into molehills; and houses which changed the Leasowes into Hampton-Court: where they talk of a glazed window as a piece of magnificence; and where their highest idea of his Majesty is, that he can ride in such a coach as 'Squire Jones or 'Squire Pryce's. The woman of the inn, at one place, said, "Glass (in windows) "was very genteel, that it was; but she "could not afford such finery."

You agree with the rest of the married world in a propensity to make proselytes. This inclination in some people gives one a kind of dread of the matter. They are ill natured, and can only wish one in their own state because they are unhappy; like persons that have the plague, who, they say, are ever desirous to propagate the infection. I make a contrary conclusion when you commend marriage, as you seem to do, when you wish Miss——may reconcile me to more than the name of wife. I know not what you have heard of my amour; probably more than I can thoroughly confirm to you. And what if I should say to you, that marriage was not once the subject of our conversation?

——"*Nec conjugis unquam*
"*Prætendi tædas, aut hæc in fœdera veni.*"

Do not you think every thing in nature strangely improved since you were married, from the tea-table to the warming-pan?

I want to see Mrs. Jago's hand-writing, that I may judge of her temper; but she must write something in my praise. Pray see you to it, in your next letter.

I could parodize my Lord Carteret's letter from Dettingen, if I had it by me. "Mrs. Arnold (thanks be praised!) has "this day gained a very considerable "victory. The scold lasted two hours. "Mrs. S——e was posted in the hall, "and Mrs. Arnold upon the stair-case; "which superiority of ground was of no "small service to her in the engagement. "The fire lasted the whole space, with-"out intermission; at the close of which "the enemy was routed, and Mrs. Ar-"nold kept the field."

Did you hear the song to the tune of "The Cuckow?"

"The Baron stood behind a tree,
"In woful plight, for nought heard he
"But cannon, cannon, &c.
"O word of fear!
"Unpleasing to a German ear."

The notes that fall upon the word "can-"non" express the sound with its echo admirably.

I send you my pastoral elegy, (or ballad, if you think that name more proper) on condition that you return it with ample remarks in your next letter: I say "return it." because I have no other copy, and am too indolent to take one. Adieu!

LETTER X.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, written in Hay-Harvest.

Dear Mr. Graves, July 8, 1743.

I DID not part from you without a great deal of melancholy. To think of the short duration of those interviews which are the objects of one's continual wishes, has been a reflection that has plagued me of old! I am sure I returned home with it then, more aggravated, as I foresaw myself returning to the same series of melancholy hours from which you had a while relieved me, and which I had particularly suffered under all this last spring! I wish to God, you might happen to be settled not far from me: a day's journey distance, however; I mean an easy one. But the odds are infinitely against me. I must only rely for my happiness on the hopes of a never-ceasing correspondence!

Soon after you were gone, I received my packet. The history of Worcestershire is mere stuff. T—I am so fond of, that, I believe, I shall have his part of the collection bound over again, neatly and separately. But sure Hammond has no right to the least inventive merit, as the preface-writer would insinuate. I do not think there is a single thought, of any eminence, that is not literally translated. I am astonished he could content himself with being so little an original.

Mr. Lyttelton and his lady are at Hagley. A malignant caterpillar has demolished the beauty of all her large oaks. Mine are secured by their littleness. But I guess, the park suffers; a large wood near me being a mere winter-piece for nakedness.

At present I give myself up to riding and thoughtlessness; being resolved to make trial of their efficacy towards a tolerable degree of health and spirits. I wish I had you for my director. I should proceed with great confidence of success; though I am brought very low by two or three fits of a fever since I saw you. Had I written to you in the midst of my dispirited condition, as I was going, you would have had a more tender and unaffected letter than I can write at another time: what I think, perhaps, at all times; but what sickness can alone elicit from a temper fearful of whining.

Surely the "*nunc formosissimus annus*" is to be limited to hay-harvest. I could give my reasons: but you will imagine them to be, the activity of country people in a pleasing employment; the full verdure of the summer: the prime of pinks, woodbines, jasmines, &c. I am old, very old; for few things give me so much mechanical pleasure as lolling on a bank in the very heat of the sun,

> "When the old come forth to play
> "On a sun-shine holiday—"

And yet it is as much as I can do to keep Mrs. Arnold from going to neighbouring houses in her smock, in despite of decency and my known disapprobation.

I find myself more of a patriot than I ever thought I was. Upon reading the account of the battle, I found a very sensible pleasure, or, as the Methodists term it, perceived my heart enlarged, &c. The map you sent me is a pretty kind of toy, but does not enough particularize the scenes of the war, &c. which was the end I had in view when I sent for it.

"*O dura messorum ilia!*" About half the appetite, digestion, strength, spirits, &c. of a mower, would make me the happiest of mortals! I would be understood literally and precisely. Adieu!

LETTER XI.

From the same to the same, after the Disappointment of a Visit.

Dear Sir, The Leasowes, Nov. 9, 1743.

I AM tempted to begin my letter as Memmius does his harangue, "*Multa "me dehortantur a vobis, ni studium vir- "tutis vestræ omnia exsuperet.*" You contrive interviews of about a minute's duration; and you make appointments in order to disappoint one; and yet, at the same time that your proceedings are thus vexatious force one to bear testimony to the inestimable value of your friendship!

friendship! I do insist upon it, that you ought to compound for the disappointment you have caused me, by a little letter every post you stay in town. I shall now scarce see you till next summer, or spring at soonest; and then I may probably take occasion to visit you, under pretence of seeing Derbyshire. Truth is, your prints have given me some curiosity to see the original places. I am grateful for your intentions with regard to giving me part of them, and impertinent in desiring you to convey them to me as soon you can well spare them. Let me know if they are sold separately at the print-shops. I think to recommend them to my new acquaintance, Mr. Lyttelton Brown. I like the humour of the ballad you mention, but am more obliged for your partial opinion of me. The notes that fall upon the word "cannon, cannon," are admirably expressive of the sound, I dare say: I mean, jointly with its echo: and so, I suppose, you will think, if you ever attended to the Tower-guns. I find I cannot afford to go to Bath previously to my London journey; though I look upon it as a proper method to make my residence in town more agreeable. I shall, probably, be there about the first of December; or before, if I can accelerate my friend Whistler's journey. The pen I write with is the most disagreeable of pens! But I have little else to say; only this—that our good friend Jack Dolman is dead at Aldrige, his father's benefice.

I beg, if you have leisure, you would inclose me in a frank the following songs, with the notes: "Stella and Flavia," "Gentle Jessy," "Sylvia, wilt thou "waste thy prime?" and any other that is new, I should be glad of that number of the British Orpheus which has my song in it, if it does not cost above six-pence. Make my compliments to your brother and sister; and believe me, in the common forms, but in no common degree, dear Mr. Graves's most affectionate friend and servant.

Do write out the whole ballad of "The Baron stood behind a Tree."

LETTER XII.

From the same to the same, with Thoughts on Advice.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Graves, Sept. 21, 1747.

I am under some apprehension that you dread the sight of a letter from me, as it seems to lay claim to the compliment of an answer. I will therefore write you one that shall wave its privilege, at least till such time as your leisure encourages, or your present dissipation does not forbid, you to send one. I dare now no longer expatiate upon the affair you have in hand; it is enough for me if you will excuse the freedom I have taken. I have often known delay produce good effects in some cases which even sagacity itself could not surmount; and, if I thought I did not go too far, would presume to recommend it now. You know I have very little of the temper of an alderman. I almost hate the idea of wealthiness as much as the word. It seems to me to carry a notion of fulness, stagnation, and insignificancy. It is this disposition of mine that can alone give any weight to the advice I send you, as it proves me not to give it through any partiality to fortune. As to what remains, you are, I hope, assured of the value I must ever have for you in any circumstances, and the regard I shall always shew for any that belongs to you. I cannot like you less or more. I now drop into other matters. Bergen, I see, is taken at last; pray what are the sentiments of your political companions? I dined some time ago with Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Pitt, who both agreed it was worth twenty thousand men to the French; which is a light in which I never used to consider it. Any little intimation that you please to confer upon me, enables me to seem wise in this country for a month; particularly if I take care to adjust my face accordingly. As I was returning last Sunday from church, whom should I meet in my way, but that sweet-souled bard Mr. James Thomson, in a chaise drawn by two horses lengthways? I welcomed him into the country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes, (who had offered me a visit) which he promised to do. So I am in daily ex-

pectations of them and all the world this weeks. I fancy they will lavish all their praises upon nature, reserving none for poor art and me. But If I ever live, and am able to perfect my schemes, I shall not despair of pleasing the few I first began with, the few friends prejudiced in my favour; and then "*Fico por los "malignatores.*" Censures will not affect me; for I am armed so strong in vanity, that they will pass by me as the idle wind which I regard not,—I think it pretty near equal, in a country place, whether you gain the small number of tasters, or the large crowd of the vulgar. The latter are more frequently met with, and gape, stupent, and stare much more. But one would chuse to please a few friends of taste before mob or gentry, the great vulgar or the small; because therein one gratifies both one's social passions and one's pride, that is, one's self-love. Above all things, I would wish to please you; and If I have a wish that projects or is prominent beyond the rest, it is to see you placed to your satisfaction near me; but Fortune must vary from her usual treatment before she favours me so far. And yet there was a time, when one might probably have prevailed on her. I knew not what to do. The affair was so intricately circumstanced—your surprising silence after the hint I gave. Mr. D— offering to serve any friend of mine; nay, pressing me to use the opportunity. His other relations, his guardians, teizing him with sure symptoms of a rupture in case of a refusal on their side. Mr. P—soliciting me if the place were sold, which it could not legally be. Friendship, propriety, impartiality, self-interest, (which I little regarded) endeavouring to distract me; I think I never spent so disagreeable an half-year since I was born. To close the whole, I could not foresee the event, which is almost foretold in your last letter, and I knew I could not serve you; but I must render it a necessary one. In short, when I can tell you the whole affair at leisure, you will own it to be of such a nature, that I must be ever in suspense concerning my behaviour, and of course shall never reflect on it with pleasure. Believe me, with the truest affection, yours.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves.

It is somewhere about the 20th of Sept. 1747; and I write from

Dear Sir, The Leasowes.

I THINK I have lived to out-correspond almost all my correspondents; whether you are the last that is to be subdued, I will not say; the rest are so fatigued, that they are not able to achieve a line. Apprized of this, and being by nature disposed to have mercy on the vanquished, "*parcere subjectis,*" I seldom write a syllable more than is requisite to further some scheme, or ascertain some interview, the latter of these being the purpose of this mine epistle. I am in great hopes I shall be at liberty to see you ere many weeks be past; and would beg of you, in the mean time, to inform me, by a letter, when I am likely, or when very unlikely, to meet with you at home. I am detained, just at present, by continual expectations of the Hagley family.

As I was returning from church on Sunday last, whom should I meet, in a chaise with two horses lengthways, but that right friendly bard Mr. Thomson? I complimented him upon his arrival in this country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes, which he said he would with abundance of pleasure: and so we parted. You will observe, that the more stress I lay upon this visit, and the more I discover to you, the more substantial is my apology for deferring mine into Warwickshire. I own, I am pleased with the prospect of shewing them something at the Leasowes beyond what they expect, I have begun my terras on the high hill I shewed you, made some considerable improvements in Virgil's Grove, and finished a walk from it to the house, after a manner which you will approve. They are going to build a castle in the park round the lodge, which, if well executed, must have a good effect; and they are going likewise to build a rotund to terminate the visto. The fault is, that they anticipate every thing which I propose to do when I become rich; but as that is never likely to be, perhaps it is not of any importance; but what I term rich, implies no great deal;

deal; I believe you are a witness to the moderation of my desires; and I flatter myself that you will believe your friend in that respect something above the vulgar:

> " *Crede non illum tibi ac scelestâ*
> " *Plebe dilectum, neque sic fidelem,*
> " *Sic lucro aversum, potuisse nasci*
> " *Patre pudendo.*"

If I come to your house, positively I will not go to see Mr. M——. He has been twice as near me as the Grange; with C—L—, and never deemed my place worth seeing. I doubt, you are a little too modest in praising it wherever you go.—Why do not you applaud it with both hands, "*utroque pollice?*"—"*Parcentes ego dexteras odi, sparge rosas.*"—I am so very partial to my native place, that it seems a miracle to me that it is not more famous. But I complain unjustly of you; for, as you have always contributed to my happiness, you have taken every opportunity to contribute to my figure. I wish I could say the same of some who have it more in their power.

I have yet about a thousand things to say to you—not now, though—Lady L—h's visit I reserve till I see you. A coach with a coronet is a pretty kind of phænomenon at my door—few prettier, expect the face of such a friend as you; for I do not want the grace to prefer a generous and spirited friendship to all the gew-gaws that ambition can contrive. I have wrote out my elegies, and heartily wish you had them to look over before I come.—I know not how to send them.—I shall bring and leave some poetry with you.—"*Thus & odores!*" or rather a proper covering for "*Thus & odores, &* "*piper & quicquid chartis amicitur inep-*" *tis!*" Adieu! dear Sir, Believe me ever yours.

LETTER XIV.

From the same to the same.

Dear Sir, 1747.

Being just returned from a small excursion, it was with the utmost pleasure that I read over your letter; and, though it abounds both in wit and waggery, I sit down incontinently to answer it with none.

The agreeableness of your letter is now heightened by the surprise they give me. I must own, I have thought you in a manner lost to the amusements in which you once delighted, correspondences, works of taste and fancy, &c. If you think the opinion worth removing, you need only favour me with such a letter now and then, and I will place you (in my imagination) where you shall see all the favourites of fortune cringing at your feet.

I think I could add about half a dozen hints to your observations on electricity, which might at least disguise the facts: and then why will you not put it into some news-paper, or monthly pamphlet? You might discover yourself to whom you have a mind. It would give more than ordinary pleasure at this time.—Some other will take the hint.—Pity, your piece should not have the advantage of novelty as well as of wit!

I dined and stayed a night with Dr. E—; he was extremely obliging, and I am glad of such a friend to visit at B—. He asked much after you.—He shewed me his Ovid—I advised him to finish some one epistle highly, that he might shew it.—The whole will not take, though it goes against me to tell him so. I should be glad he could succeed at B—; and could I serve him, it would be with a safe conscience, for I take him to excel the rest of B—'s physicians far in point of speculation and diligence, &c.

I send you the song you asked for, and request of you to write me out your new edition of the election verses; and, at your leisure, a copy of the poem which we altered.

THE LARK.

Go tuneful bird, that gladd'st the skies,
To Daphne's window speed thy way,
And there on quiv'ring pinions rise,
And there thy vocal art display.

And if she deign thy notes to hear,
And if she praise thy matin song;
Tell her, the sounds that sooth her ear,
To simple British birds belong.

Tell her, in livelier plumes array'd,
The bird from Indian groves may shine:
But ask the lovely, partial maid,
What are his notes compared to thine?

Then bid her treat that witless beau
And all his motley race with scorn;
And heal deserving Damon's woe,
Who sings her praise, and sings forlorn.

I am, Sir, your most faithful friend and servant.

Have you read Watson, Martyn, and Freke, on electricity? I accidently met with the two former, by which my head is rendered almost giddy—Electrics, non-electrics, electrics *per se*, and bodies that are only conductors of electricity, have a plaguy bad effect on so vortical a brain as mine.

I will infallibly spend a week with you, perhaps about February, if it suits you; though I think too it must be later.

I have been painting in water colours, during a visit I made, flowers. I would recommend the amusement to you, if you can allow it the time that is expedient.

I trust you will give me one entire week in the spring, when my late alterations may exhibit themselves to advantage.

LETTER XV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

Dear Sir, The Leasowes, Mar. 23, 1747-8.

I HAVE sent Tom over for the papers which I left under your inspection; having nothing to add upon this head, but that the more freely and particularly you give me your opinion, the greater will be the obligation which I shall have to acknowledge.

I shall be very glad, if I happen to receive a good large bundle of your own compositions; in regard to which, I will observe any commands which you shall please to lay upon me.

I am favoured with a certain correspondence, by way of letter, which I told you I should be glad to cultivate; and I find it very entertaining.

Pray did you receive my answer to your last letter, sent by way of London? I should be extremely sorry to be debarred the pleasure of writing to you by the post, as often as I feel a violent propensity to describe the notable incidents of my life: which amount to about as much as the tinsel of your little boy's hobby-horse.

I am on the point of purchasing a couple of busts for the niches of my hall; and believe me, my good friend, I never proceed one step in ornamenting my little farm, but I enjoy the hopes of rendering it more agreeable to you, and the small circle of acquaintance which sometimes favour me with their company.

I shall be extremely glad to see you and Mr. Fancourt when the trees are green: that is, in May; but I would not have you content yourself with a single visit this summer. If Mr. Hardy (to whom you will make my compliments) inclines to favour me so far, you must calculate so as to wait on him whenever he finds it convenient; though I have better hopes of making his reception here agreeable to him when my Lord Dudley comes down. I wonder how he would like the scheme I am upon, of exchanging a large tankard for a silver standish.

I have had a couple of paintings given me since you were here. One of them is a Madona, valued, as it is said, at ten guineas in Italy, but which you would hardly purchase at the price of five shillings. However, I am endeavouring to make it out to be one of Carlo Maratt's, who was a first hand, and famous for Madonas; even so as to be nick-named "*Carluccio delle Madonne*," by Salvator Rosa. Two letters of the cypher (CM) agree; what shall I do with regard to the third? It is a small piece, and sadly blackened. It is about the size (though not quite the shape) of the Bacchus over the parlour door, and has much such a frame.

A person may amuse himself almost as cheaply as he pleases. I find no small delight in rearing all sorts of poultry; geese, turkeys, pullets, ducks, &c. I am also somewhat smitten with a blackbird which I have purchased: a very fine one; brother by father, but not by mother, to the unfortunate bird you so beautifully describe, a copy of which description you must not fail to send me;—but as I said before, one may easily habituate one's self to cheap amusements; that is, rural ones (for all town amusements are horridly expensive);—I would have you cultivate your garden; plant flowers; have a bird or two in the hall (they will at least amuse your children); write now and then a song; buy now and then a book; write now and then a letter to your most sincere friend, and affectionate servant.

P. S. I hope you have exhausted all your spirit of criticism upon my verses, that you may have none left to cavil at this letter; for I am ashamed to think, that you, in particular, should receive the dullest I ever wrote in my life. Make my compliments to Mrs. Jago.—She can go a little abroad, you say.—Tell her, I should be proud to shew her the Leasowes. Adieu!

LETTER XVI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. —, on his Marriage.

This was written August 21, 1748; but not sent till the 28th.

Dear Sir,

How little soever I am inclined to write at this time, I cannot bear that you should censure me of unkindness in seeming to overlook the late change in your situation. It will, I hope, be esteemed superfluous in me to send you my most cordial wishes that you may be happy; but it will, perhaps, be something more significant to say, that I believe you will: building my opinion on the knowledge I have long had of your own temper, and the account you give me of the person whom you have made choice of, to whom I desire you to pay my sincere and most affectionate compliments.

I shall always be glad to find you *præsentibus æquum*, though I should always be pleased when I saw you *tentantem majora*. I think you should neglect no opportunity at this time of life to push your fortune so far as an elegant competency, that you be not embarrassed with those kind of solicitudes towards the evening of your day;

" Ne te semper inops agitet vexetque cupido,
" Ne pavor, & rerum mediocriter utilium spes!"

I would have you acquire, if possible, what the world calls, with some propriety, an easy fortune; and what I interpret, such a fortune as allows of some inaccuracy and inattention, that one may not be continually in suspense about the laying out a shilling:—this kind of advice may seem extremely dogmatical in me; but, if it carries any haughty air, I will obviate it by owning that I never acted as I say. I have lost my road to happiness, I confess; and instead of pursuing the way to the fine lawns, and venerable oaks which distinguish the region of it, I am got into the pitiful parterre-garden of amusement, and view the nobler scenes at a distance. I think I can see the road too that leads the better way, and can shew it others: but I have many miles to measure back before I can get into it myself, and no kind of resolution to take a single step. My chief amusements at present are the same they have long been, and lie scattered about my farm. The French have what they call a *parque ornée;* I suppose, approaching about as near to a garden as the park at Hagley. I give my place the title of a *ferme ornée*; though, if I had money, I should hardly confine myself to such decorations as that name requires. I have made great improvements; and the consequence is, that I long to have you see them.

I have not heard whether Miss —'s match proceeded.—I suppose your objections were grounded on the person's age and temper; and that they had the less weight, as they supposed you acted indiscreetly yourself: I can say but little on the occasion. You know——better than I do. Only this I must add, that I have so great an esteem for your sister, that it will be necessary to my ease, that whoever marries her she should be happy.

I have little hopes that I shall now see you often in this country; though it would be you, in all probability, as soon as any, that would take a journey of fifty miles,

" To see the poorest of the sons of men."

The truth is, my affairs are miserably embroiled, by my own negligence, and the non-payment of tenants. I believe, I shall be forced to seize on one next week for three years and a half's rent, due last Lady-day; an affair to which I am greatly averse, both through indolence and compassion. I hope, however, I shall be always able (as I am sure I shall be desirous) to entertain a friend of a philosophical regimen, such as you and Mr. Whistler; and that will be all I can do.

Hagley park is considerably improved since you were here, and they have built a castle by way of ruin on the highest part of it, which is just seen from my wood; but by the removal of a tree or two (growing in a wood that joins to the park, and which, fortunately enough, belongs to Mr. Dolman and me,) I believe it may be rendered a considerable object here.

I purpose to write to Mr. Whistler either this post or the next. The fears

you

you seemed in upon my account are very kind, but have no grounds. I am, dear Mr.—, habitually and sincerely your, &c.

My humble service to your neighbours. —Smith (whom you knew at Derby) will publish a print of my grove in a small collection.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago, with an Invitation to the Leasowes.

Sept. 3, Saturday night, 1748.

Dear Mr. Jago,

I HARDLY know whether it will be prudent in me to own, that I wrote you a long letter upon the receipt of your last, which I have now upon my table. I condemn this habit in myself entirely, and should, I am sure, be very unhappy, if my friends, by my example, should be induced to contract the same. The truth is, I had not expressed myself in it to my mind, and it was full of blots, and blunders, and interlinings; yet, such as it was, it had wearied my attention, and given me disinclination to begin it afresh. I am now impatient to remove any scruple you may have concerning my grateful sense of all your favours, and the invariable continuance of my affection and esteem.— I find by your last obliging letter, that my machinations and devices are not entirely private.—You knew of my draught of Hagley castle about the bigness of a barley-corn; you knew of our intended visit to Lady Luxborough's; and I must add, Mr. Thomas Hall knew of my contrivance for the embellishment of Mr. Hardy's house. Nothing is there hid that shall not be revealed.—Our visit to Barrels is now over and past.—Lady Luxborough has seen Hagley castle in the original:—and as to my desire that my draught might be shewn to no christian soul, you surely did but ill comply with it, when you shewed that drawing to a clergyman. However, you may have acted up to my real meaning, if you have taken care not to shew it to any connoisseur. I meant chiefly to guard against any one that knows the rules, in whose eyes, I am sure, it could not turn to my credit. —Pray how do you like the festoons dangling over the oval windows?—It is the chief advantage in repairing an old house, that one may deviate from the rules without any extraordinary censure.

I will not trouble you now with many particulars. The intent of Tom's coming is, to desire your company and Mrs. Jago's this week.—I should be extremely glad if your convenience would allow you to come on Monday or Tuesday; but, if it is entirely impracticable, I would beseech you not to put off the visit longer than the Monday following, for the leaves of my groves began to fall a great pace.—I beg once more, you would let no small inconvenience prevent your being here on Monday.—As to my visit at Icheneton, you may depend upon it soon after; and I hope you will not stand upon punctilio, when I mention my inclination that you may all take a walk through my coppices before their beauty is much impaired. Were I in a sprightly vein, I would aim at saying something genteel by way of answer to Mrs. Jago's compliment.—As it is, I can only thank her for the substance, and applaud the politeness of it.—I postpone all other matters till I see you. I am, habitually and sincerely, your, &c.

I beg my compliments to Mr. Hardy.

P.S. I am not accustomed, my dear friend, to send you a blank page; nor can I be content to do so now.

I thank you very sensibly for the verses with which you honour me. I think them good lines, and so do others that have seen them; but you will give me leave when I see you, to propose some little alteration. As to an epistle, it would be executed with difficulty, and I would have it turn to your credit as well as my own. But you have certainly of late acquired an ease in writing; and I am tempted to think, that what you write henceforth will be universally good. Persons that have seen your elegies, like "The Blackbirds" best, as it is most assuredly the most correct; but I, who pretend to great penetration, can foresee that "The Linnets" will be made to excel.—More of this when I see you. Poor Miss G—, J— R— says, is married; and poor Mr. Thomson, Mr. Pitt tells me, is dead.—He was to have been at Hagley this week, and then I should probably have seen him here.—As it is, I will erect an urn in Virgil's Grove to his memory.—I was really as much shocked to hear of his death, as if I had known and loved him for a number

number of years :—God knows, I lean on a very few friends: and if they drop me, I become a wretched misanthrope.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. Shenstone to a Friend, disappointing him of a Visit.

Fie on Mr. N—! he has disappointed me of the most seasonable visit that heart could wish or desire.—My flowers in blossom, my walks newly cleaned, my neighbours invited, and I languishing for lack of your company! Mean time you are going to dance attendance on a courtier.—Would to God! he may disappoint you, according to the usual practice of those gentlemen: I mean, by giving you a far better living than you ever expected.

I have no sooner made than I am ready to recall that wish, in order to substitute another in its place; which is, that you may rather squat yourself down upon a fat goose living in Warwickshire, or one in Staffordshire, or perhaps Worcestershire, of the same denomination. I do not mention Shropshire, because I think I am more remote from the main body of that county than I am from either of the others. But, nevertheless, by all means wait on Mr. N—; shew him all respect, yet so as not to lay out any of the profits of your contingent living in a black velvet waistcoat and breeches to appear before him. True merit needeth nought of this. Besides, peradventure, you may not receive the first quarter's income of it this half year. He will probably do something for you one time or other; but you shall never go into Ireland, that is certain, for less than a deanery: not for less than the deanery of St. Patrick's, if you take my advice. Lower your hopes only to advance your surprise, "*grata supervenient quæ non* "*sperabimus.*" Come to me as you may. A week is elapsed since you began to be detained; you may surely come over in a fortnight now at farthest:—I will be at home.—However, write directly; you know our letters are long upon their journey.—I expected you the beginning of every week, till I received your last letter, impatiently.

For my part, I begin to wean myself from all hopes and expectations whatever.—I feed my wild ducks, and I water my carnations! happy enough, if I could extinguish my ambition quite, or indulge (what I hope I feel in an equal degree) the desire of being something more beneficial in my sphere.—Perhaps some few other circumstances would want also to be adjusted.

I have just read Lord Bolingbroke's three letters, which I like as much as most pieces of politicks I ever read. I admire, especially, the spirit of the style. I as much admire at the editor's unpopular preface.——I know the family hitherto seemed to make it a point to conceal Pope's affair; and now, the editor, under Lord B.'s inspection, not only relates, but invites people, to think the worst of it.——What collateral reasons my Lord may have for thinking ill of Mr. Pope, I cannot say; but surely it is not political to lessen a person's character that had done one so much honour. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

I have this moment received a long letter from Lady Luxborough; and you are to look on all I said concerning both Lord Bolingbroke's affair and her resentment as premature. My Lady's daughter and son-in-law visit her next week.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

From the Leasowes, as it appears on a rainy Evening, June 1749.

Dear Sir,

It would probably be so long before you can receive this letter by the post, that I cannot think of subjecting my thanks for your last, or my hopes of seeing you soon, to such an uncertainty.—I shall not now have it in my power to meet you at Mr. Wren's immediately, so would lose no time in requesting your company here next week, if you please. I hope Mrs. Jago also will accompany you, and that you will set out the first day of the week, even Monday; that you may not leave me in less than six days time, under a pretence of necessity. As to the verses you were so kind to convey,

convey, I will take occasion when you, come.

—"To find out, like a friend,
"Something to blame, and mickle to commend."

So I say no more at present on that head.

I love to read verses, but I write none. "*Peti, nihil me sicut ante juvat scribe-*" *re!*"—I will not say none; for I wrote the following at breakfast yesterday, and they are all I have wrote since I saw you. They are now in one of the root-houses of Virgil's Grove, for the admonition of my good friends the vulgar; of whom I have multitudes every Sunday evening, and who very fortunately believe in fairies, and are no judges of poetry.

"Here in cool grot, and mossy cell,
"We tripping fawns and fairies dwell:
"Tho' rarely seen by mortal eye,
"Oft as the moon, ascended high,
"Darts thro' yon limes her quiv'ring beam,
"We frisk it near this crystal stream.

"Then fear to spoil these sacred bow'rs;
"Nor wound the shrubs, nor crop the flow'rs;
"So may your path with sweets abound,
"So may your couch with rest be crown'd!
"But ill-betide or nymph or swain,
"Who dares these hallow'd haunts profane"
OBERON.

I suppose the rotund at Hagley is completed, but I have not seen it hitherto; neither do I often journey or visit any where, except when a shrub or flower is upon the point of blossoming near my walks. I forget one visit I lately made in the neighbourhood, to a young clergyman of taste and ingenuity. His name is Pixell; he plays finely upon the violin and very well upon the harpsichord; has set many things to music, some in the soft way, with which I was much delighted. He is young, and has time to improve himself. He gave me an opportunity of being acquainted with him by frequently visiting, and introducing company to my walks. I met him one morning with an Italian in my grove, and our acquaintance has been growing ever since.—He has a share in an estate that is near me, and lives there at present; but I doubt will not do so long;—when you come, I will send for him.—Have you read my Lord Bolingbroke's Essays on Patriotism, &c.? and have you read Merope? and do you take in the *Magazin des Londres?* and pray how does your garden flourish? I warrant you do not yet know the difference betwixt a ranunculus and an anemone—God help ye!—Come to me, and be informed of the nature of all plants, "from the cedar on Mount "Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth "out of the wall."—Pray do not fail to decorate your new garden, whence you may transplant all kinds of flowers into your verses. If by chance you make a visit at I——— fifty years hence; from some distant part of England, shall you forget this little angle where you used to muse and sing? "*En unquam,* "*&c. Post aliquot, tua regna videns mi-*" *rabere, arislas.*"

I expect by the return of Tom to receive a trifle that will amuse you. It is a small gold seal of Vida's head, given by Vertue to a relation of mine, who published Vida, and introduced Vertue into business.—Perhaps you remember Mr. Tristram of Hampton, and the day we spent there from school; it was his. I am, very cordially, yours.

LETTER XX.

Mr. Shenstone to C—— W——, Esq.

Dear Sir, The Leasowes, Nov. 2, 1753.

IT never can be that I owe you for three letters; as to two I will agree with you; one that I received together with my books, and the other soon after; but that I am indebted for more than these—

"*Credat Judæus Apella,*
"*Non ego.*"

Even that same "*Judæus Apella*" who affords me this very opportunity of sending my compliments to you and Mrs. W—, and of assuring you that if I had not purposed to have seen you, I had wrote to you long ago.

Master Harris talks very respectfully of your garden; and we have no dispute, save only in one point—he says, that you labour very hard in your vocation: whereas I am not willing to allow that all the work you ever did, or will do in it, is worth a single bunch of radishes. However, I dare not contradict him too much, because he waits for my letter.

How

How happy are you that can hold up your spade, and cry, "Avaunt, Satan!" when a toyman offers you his deceitful vanities! Do not you rejoice inwardly, and pride yourself greatly in your own philosophy?

"Twas thus—
"The wise Athenian cross'd a glitt'ring fair:
"Unmov'd by tongues and sights he walk'd the
"place,
"Thro' tape, tags, tinsel, gimp, perfume, and
"lace;
"Then bends from Mar's Hill his awful eyes,
"And, 'What a world I never want!' he cries."
PARNELL.

Mean time do not despise others that can find any needful amusement in what, I think, Bunyan very aptly calls Vanity Fair: I have been at it many times this season, and have bought many kinds of merchandise there. It is a part of philosophy, to adapt one's passions to one's way of life; and the solitary unsocial sphere in which I move makes me think it happy that I can retain a relish for such trifles as I can draw into it. Mean time, I dare not reason too much upon this head. Reason, like the famous concave mirror at Paris, would, in two minutes, vitrify all the Jew's pack: I mean, that it would immediately destroy all the form, colour, and beauty, of every thing that is not merely useful.—But I ramble too far, and you do not want such speculations. My intent when I sat down, was to tell you, that I shall probably see you very soon, and certainly remain in the mean time, and at all times, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on the Death of Mr. Shenstone's Brother.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Graves, Feb. 14, 1752.

You will be amazed at my long silence; and it might reasonably excite some disgust if my days had passed of late in the manner they used to do: but I am not the man I was; perhaps I never shall be. Alas! my dearest friend! I have lost my only brother! and, since the fatal close of November, I have had neither peace nor respite from agonizing thoughts!

You, I think, have seen my brother; but perhaps had no opportunity of distinguishing him from the groupe of others whom we called good-natured men. This part of his character was so visible in his countenance, that he was generally beloved at sight: I, who must be allowed to know him, do assure you, that his understanding was no way inferior to his benevolence. He had not only a sound judgment, but a lively wit and genuine humour. As these were many times eclipsed by his native bashfulness, so his benevolence only suffered by being shewn to an excess. I here mean his giving too indiscriminately into those jovial meetings of company, where the warmth of a social temper is discovered with least reserve; but the virtues of his head and heart would soon have shone without alloy. The foibles of his youth were wearing off; and his affection for me and regard to my advice, with his own good sense, would soon have rendered him all that I could have wished in a successor. I never in my life knew a person more sincere in the expression of his love or dislike. But it was the former that suited the propensity of his heart; the latter was as transient as the starts of passion that occasioned it. In short, with much true genius and real fortitude, he was, according to the English acceptation "a truly honest man;" and I think I may also add, a truly English character; but "*habeo, dixi? immo habui fratrem & "amicum, Chreme!*" All this have I lost in him. He is now in regard to this world no more than a mere idea: and this idea, therefore, though deeply tinged with melancholy, I must, and surely ought to, cherish and preserve.

I believe I wrote you some account of his illness last spring; from which to all appearance he was tolerably well recovered. He took the air, and visited about with me, during the warmer months of summer; but my pleasure was of short duration. "*Hæsit lateri "lethalis arundo!*" The peripneumony under which he laboured in the spring had terminated in an adhesion of the lungs to the pleura, so that he could never lie but upon his right side; and this, as the weather grew colder, occasioned an obstruction that could never be surmounted.

Though my reason forewarned me of the event, I was not the more prepared for it.—Let me not dwell upon it.—It is altogether insupportable in every respect and my imagination seems more assiduous

in

in educing pain from this occasion, than I ever yet found it in administering to my pleasure.—This hurts me to no purpose —I know it; and yet, when I have avocated my thoughts, and fixed them for a while upon common amusements, I suffer the same sort of consciousness as if I were guilty of a crime. Believe me, this has been the most sensible affliction I ever felt in my life; and you, who know my anxiety when I had far less reason to complain, will more easily conceive it now, than I am able to describe it.

I cannot pretend to fill up my paper with my usual subjects.—I should thank you for your remarks upon my poetry; but I despise poetry: and I might tell you of all my little rural improvements; but I hate them.—What can I now expect from my solitary rambles through them, but a series of melancholy reflections and irksome anticipations ?—Even the pleasure I should take in shewing them to you, the greatest they can afford me, must be now greatly inferior to what it might formerly have been.

How have I prostituted my sorrow on occasions that little concerned me! I am ashamed to think of that idle "Elegy "upon Autumn," when I have so much more important cause to hate and to condemn it now; but the glare and gaiety of the spring is what I principally dread; when I shall find all things restored but my poor brother, and something like those lines of Milton will run for ever in my thoughts:

"Thus, with the year,
"Seasons return; but not to me returns
"A brother's cordial smile, at eve or morn."

I shall then seem to wake from amusements, company, every sort of inebriation with which I have been endeavouring to lull my grief asleep, as from a dream; and I shall feel as if I were, that instant, despoiled of all I have chiefly valued for thirty years together; of all my present happiness, and all my future prospects. The melody of birds, which he no more must hear; the cheerful beams of the sun, of which he no more must partake; every wonted pleasure will produce that sort of pain to which my temper is most obnoxious. Do not consider this as poetry.—Poetry on such occasions is no more than literal truth. In the present case it is less; for half the tenderness I feel is altogether shapeless and inexpressible.

After all, the wisdom of the world may perhaps esteem me a gainer. Ill do they judge of this event, who think that any shadow of amends can be made for the death of a brother, and the disappointment of all my schemes, by the accession of some fortune, which I never can enjoy!

This is a mournful narrative: I will not, therefore, enlarge it.—Amongst all changes and chances, I often think of you; and pray there may be no suspicion or jealousy betwixt us during the rest of our lives. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Shenstone to C— W—, Esq.

Dear Mr. W—, July 22, 1752.

I do not know why I made you a promise of a pretty long letter. What I now write will be but a moderate one, both in regard to length and style; yet write I must, *par maniere d'acquit*, and you have brought four-pence expence upon yourself for a parcel of nonsense, and to no manner of purpose. This is not tautology, you must observe; for nonsense sometimes answers very considerable purposes.—In love, it is eloquence itself.—In friendship, therefore, by all the rules of sound logic, you must allow it to be something; what I cannot say, "*nequeo monstrare*, & *sentio* "*tantum*." The principal part of a correspondence betwixt two idle men consists in two important inquires—what we do, and how we do; but as all persons ought to give satisfaction before they expect to receive it, I am to tell you in the first place, that my own health is tolerably good, or rather what I must call good, being, I think, much better than it has been this last half year.—Then as touching my occupation, alas! "Othel- "lo's occupation's gone!" I neither read nor write aught besides a few letters; and I give myself up entirely to scenes of dissipation; lounge at my Lord Dudley's for near a week together: make dinners; accept of invitations; sit up till three o'clock in the morning with young sprightly married woman, over

white port and *vin de paysans;* ramble over my fields; issue out orders to my hay-makers; foretell rain and fair weather; enjoy the fragrance of hay, the cocks, and the wind-rows; admire that universal lawn which is produced by the scythe; sometimes inspect and draw mouldings for my carpenters; sometimes paper my walls, and at other times my ceilings; do every social office that falls in my way, but never seek out for any.

" *Sed vos quid tandem? quæ circumvo-*
" *litas agilis thyma? non tu corpus eras*
" *sine pectore. Non tibi parvum inge-*
" *nium, non incultum est!*" In short, what do you? and how do you do?—that is all.

Tell my young pupil, your son, he must by all manner of means send me a Latin letter: and if he have any billet in French for Miss Lea at The Grange, or even in Hebrew, Coptic, or Syriac, I will engage it shall be received very graciously. Thither am I going to dinner this day, and there " *implebor vete-*
" *ris Bacchi, pinguisque ferinæ.*

All this looks like extreme jollity; but is this the true state of the case, or may I not more properly apply the

" *Spem vultu simulat, premit atrum corde do-*
" *lorem?*"

Accept this scrawl in place of a letter, and believe me yours, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. C—, on the Receipt of his Picture.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. C—, Oct. 3, 1752.

I AM very unfeignedly ashamed to reflect how long it is since I received your present, and how much longer it is since I received your letter. I have been resolving to write to you almost daily ever since you left me; yet have foolishly enough permitted avocations (of infinitely less importance than your correspondence) to interfere with my gratitude, my interest, and my inclination. What apology I have to make, though no way adequate to my negligence, is in short as follows. After the receipt of your letter, I deferred writing till I could speak of the arrival of your picture.—This did not happen till about a month or five weeks ago, when I was embarrassed with masons, carvers, carpenters, and company, all at a time. And though it were idle enough to say, that I could not find one vacant hour for my purpose, yet in truth my head was so confused by these multifarious distractions, that I could have written nothing satisfactory either to myself or you; nothing worth a single penny, supposing the postage were to cost you no more. The workmen had not finished my rooms a minute, when Lady Luxborough, Mrs. Davies, and Mr. Outing arrived, with five servants and a set of horses, to stay with me for some time. After a nine days visit, I returned with them to Barrels where I continued for a week; and whither (by the way) I go again with Lord Dudley in about a fortnight's time. Other company filled up the interstices of my summer; and I hope my dear friend will accept of this apology for so long a chasm of silence, during which I have been uniformly at his service, and true to that inviolable friendship I shall ever bear him.

I proceed now to thank you for the distinction you shew me, in sending me your picture: I do it very sincerely. It is assuredly a strong likeness, as my Lady Luxborough with all her servants that have seen you, pronounce, as well as I; consequently more valuable to a friend than a face he does not know, though it were one of Raphael's. The smile about the mouth is bad; as it agrees but ill with the gravity of the eyes, and as a smile ever so little *outré* has a bad effect in a picture where it is constant, though it may be ever so graceful in a person where it is transitory. However, this may be altered, when I can meet with a good painter. I have no other objection, but to the prominence of the belly. The hair, I think, is good; and the coat and band no way exceptionable. I have given it all the advantage I can: it has a good light, and makes part of an elegant chimney-piece in a genteel, though little breakfast-room, at the end of my house.

Mr. Whistler and I are now upon terms, and two or three friendly letters have been interchanged betwixt us. He presses me to come to Whitchurch, and I him to come over to The Leasowes; but

but the winter cometh, when no man can visit.—The dispute is adjusted by time, whilst we are arguing it by expostulation.—No uncommon event in most sublunary projects!

Lady Luxborough said very extraordinary things in praise of Mrs. G—, after you left us at Barrels: yet I sincerely believe no more than she deserves. I took the liberty of shewing her your letter here, as it included a compliment to her which I thought particularly genteel—She will always consider you as a person of genius, and her friend.

During most of this summer (wherein I have seen much company either here or at Lord Dudley's), I have been almost constantly engaged in one continued scene of jollity. I endeavour to find relief from such sort of dissipation; and, when I had once given into it, I was obliged to proceed; as, they say, is the case when persons disguise their faces with paint. Mine was a sort of painting applied to my temper—"*Spem vultu simulare, premere atrum corde dolorem.*" And the moment I left it off, my soul appeared again all haggard and forlorn. My company has now deserted me; the spleen-fogs begin to rise; and the terrible incidents of last winter revive apace in my memory. This is my state of mind, while I write you these few lines; yet, I thank God, my health is not much amiss.

I did not forget my promise of a box, &c. to Mrs. G—. I had a dozen sent me, one or two of which I could have liked, had they been better finished, They were of good oval, white enamel, with flowers, &c. but horridly guilt, and not accurately painted. I beg my best service to her, and will make a fresh essay. My dearest friend, accept this awkward letter for the present.—In a few posts, I will write again.—Believe me yours from the bottom of my soul.

I will send you a label for made-wine, after my own plan. It is enamel, with grapes, shepherd's pipe, &c. The motto "*Vin de Paisan.*"

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Jago.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr Jago, Nov. 15, 1752.

COULD I with convenience mount my horse, and ride to Harbury this instant, I should much more willingly do so than begin this letter. Such terrible events have happened to us, since we saw each other last, that, however irksome it may be to dwell upon them, it is in the same degree unnatural to substitute any subject in their place.

I do sincerely forgive your long silence, my good friend, indeed I do; though it gave me uneasiness. I hope you do the same by mine. I own, I could not readily account for the former period of yours, any otherwise than by supposing that I had said or done something in the levity of my heart, which had given you disgust; but being conscious to myself of the most sincere regard for you, and believing it could never be discredited for any trivial inadvertencies, I remember, I continued still in expectation of a letter, and did not dream of writing till such time as I had received one. I trusted you would write at last; and that by all my past endeavours to demonstrate my friendship, you would believe the tree was rooted in my heart, whatever irregularity you might observe in the branches.

This was my situation before that dreadful æra which gave me such a shock as to banish my best friends for a time out of my memory. And when they recurred, as they did the first of any thing, I was made acquainted with that deplorable misfortune of yours; Believe me, I sympathised in your affliction, notwithstanding my own; but alas; what comfort could I administer, who had need of every possible assistance to support myself? I wrote indeed a few letters with difficulty; amongst the rest, one to my friend Graves; but it was to vent my complaint.—I will send you the letter, if you please, as it is by far my least painful method of conveying you some account of my situation. Let it convince you, that I could have written nothing at that time, which could have been of any service to you: let it afford you, at least,

least, a faint sketch of my dearest brother's character; but let it not appear an ostentatious display of sorrow, of which I am by no means guilty. I know but too well that I discovered upon the occasion, what some would call an unmanly tenderness; but I know also, that sorrow upon such subjects as these is very consistent with virtue, and with the most absolute resignation to the just decrees of Providence—"*Hominis est enim affici* "*dolore, sentire; resistere tamen & so-* "*latia admittere, non solatiis non egere.*" Pliny.—I drank, purchased amusements, never suffered myself to be a minute without company, no matter what, so it was continual. At length, by an attention to such conversation and such amusements as I could at other times despise, I forgot so far as to be cheerful.—And after this, the summer, through an almost constant succession of lively and agreeable visitants, proved even a scene of jollity.—It was inebriation all, though of a mingled nature; yet has it maintained a sort of truce with grief, till time can assist me more effectually by throwing back the event to a distance.——Now, indeed, that my company has all forsaken me, and I am delivered up to winter, silence, and reflection, the incidents of the last year revive apace in my memory; and I am even astonished to think of the gaiety of my summer. The fatal anniversary, the "*dies quem semper acerbum*," &c. is beginning to approach, and every face of the sky suggests the ideas of last winter.—Yet I find myself cheerful in company; nor would I recommend it to you to be much alone.—You would lay the highest obligation upon me by coming over at this time.—I pressed your brother, whom I saw at Birmingham, to use his influence with you; but if you can by no means undertake the journey, I will take my speediest opportunity of seeing you at Harbury.—Mr. Miller invited me strenuously to meet Dr. Lyttelton at his house; but I believe my most convenient season will be, when my Lord Dudley goes to Barrels; for I can but ill bear the pensiveness of a long and lonely expedition. After all, if you could come hither first, it would afford me the most entire satisfaction.—I have been making alterations in my house that would amuse you; and have many matters to discourse with you, which would be endless to mention upon paper.—Adieu! my dear friend! May your merit be known to some one who has greater power to serve you than myself; but be assured, at the same time, that no one loves you better, or esteems you more.

LETTER XXV.

From the same to the same.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Jago, Feb. 27, 1753.

I WROTE you some account of myself, and inclosed some trivial criticisms, in a letter I sent you about a fortnight ago, which I hope you have received.—Tom comes now to inquire after your health, and to bring back my "Ode to Colonel "Lyttelton;" in regard to which, I desire that you will not be sparing of your animadversions. I whispered my difficulties to Mr. Miller at Hagley, how delicate I found the subject, and how hard it was to satisfy either myself or others; in all which points he agreed with me. Nevertheless, having twice broken my promise of sending a corrected copy to Sir George, I was obliged to make my peace by a fresh one, which, I suppose, I must of necessity perform.—Give me your whole sentiments hereupon, I beseech you; in particular and in general, as a critic and as a friend.—The bad state of spirits which I complained of in my last, for a long time together made me utterly irresolute: every thing occasioned me suspense; and I did nothing with appetite.—This was owing in a great measure to a slow nervous fever, as I have since discovered by many concurrent symptoms. It is now, I think, wearing off by degrees. I seem to anticipate a little of that "vernal delight" which Milton mentions, and thinks

"Able to chase
"All sadness, but despair."

At least, I began to resume my silly clue of hopes and expectations: which I know, however, will not guide me to any thing more satisfactory than before.

I have read scarce any new books this season. Voltaire's new tragedy was sent me from London; but what has given me the most amusement, has been the "Lettres de Madame de Maintenon." You have probably read them already in

English, and then I need not recommend them. The "Life of Lord Bolingbroke" is entirely his public life, and the book three parts filled with political remarks.

As to writing, I have not attempted it this year and more; nor do I know when I shall again. However, I would be glad to correct that "Ode to the Dutchess of Somerset," when once I can find in whose hands it is deposited. I was shewn a very elegant letter of hers, the other day; wherein she asks for it with great politeness: and as it includes nothing but a love of rural life, and such sort of amusements as she herself approves, I shall stand a good chance of having it received with partiality. She lives the life of a *religieuse*. She has written my Lady Luxborough a very serious letter of condolence upon the misfortune in her family; and need enough has Lady Luxborough of so unchangeable a friend! for sure nothing could have happened to a person in her situation more specifically unfortunate.—Mr. Reynolds has been at Barrels, I hear, and has brought her a machine that goes into a coat-pocket, yet answers the end of "a jack for boots, a reading-desk, a "cribbage-board, a pair of snuffers, a "ruler, an eighteen-inch rule, three "pair of nut-crackers, a lemon-squeezer, "two candlesticks, a picquet-board, and "the Lord knows what beside." Can you form an idea of it? If you can, do you not think it must give me pain to reflect, that I myself am useful for no sort of purpose, when a paltry bit of wood can answer so many? But, indeed, whilst it pretends to these exploits, it performs nothing well; and therein I agree with it. So true it is, with regard to me, what I told you long ago,

"*Multa & præclara minantem*
"*Vivere nec recte, nec suaviter!*"

We have a turnpike-bill upon the point of being brought into the House of Commons: it will convey you about half the way betwixt Birmingham and Hales, and from thence to Hagley; but, I trust, there will be a left-hand attraction, which will always make you deviate from the straight line.

I should be ashamed to reflect how much I have dwelt upon myself in this letter, but that I seriously approve of egotism in letters: and were I not to do so, I should not have any other subject. I have not a single neighbour, that is either fraught with politeness, literature, or intelligence; much less have I a tide of spirits to set my invention afloat: but the less I am able to amuse you, the more desirous am I of your letters; which afford me the truest entertainment, even when my spirits are ever so much depressed.

That universal cheerfulness which is the lot of some people, persons that you and I may envy at the same time that we despise, is worth all that either fortune or nature can bestow.

I am, with entire affection, yours.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Shenstone to Mr. Graves, on the Death of Mr. Whistler.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Graves, June 7, 1754.

THE melancholy account of our dear friend Whistler's death was conveyed to me, at the same instant, by yours and by his brother's letter. I have written to his brother this post; though I am very ill able to write upon the subject, and would willingly have waved it longer, but for decency. The triumvirate, which was the greatest happiness and the greatest pride of my life, is broken! The fabric of an ingenuous and disinterested friendship has lost a noble column! yet it may, and will, I trust, endure till one of us be laid as low. In truth, one can so little satisfy one's self with what we say upon such sad occasions, that I made three or four essays before I could endure what I had written to his brother.—Be so good as excuse me to him as well as you can, and establish me in the good opinion of him and Mr. Walker.

Poor Mr. Whistler! how do all our little strifes and bickerments appear to us at this time! yet we may with comfort reflect, that they were not of a sort that touched the vitals of our friendship; and I may say, that we fondly loved and esteemed each other, of necessity—"*Tales* "*animas oportuit esse concordes.*" Poor Mr. Whistler! not a single acquaintance have I made, not a single picture or curiosity have I purchased, not a single embellishment

bellishment have I given to my place, since he was last here, but I have had his approbation and his amusement in my eye. I will assuredly inscribe my larger urn to his memory; nor shall I pass it without a pleasing melancholy during the remainder of my days. We have each of us received a pleasure from his conversation, which no other conversation can afford us at our present time of life.

Adieu! my dear friend! may our remembrance of the person we have lost be the strong and everlasting cement of our affection! Assure Mr. John Whistler of the regard I have for him, upon his own account, as well as his brother's. Write to me; directly if you have opportunity. Whether you have or no, believe me to be ever most affectionately yours.

I beg my compliments to Mrs. Graves.

LETTER XXVII.

From the same to the same, on hearing that his Letters to Mr. Whistler were destroyed.

The Leasowes,
Dear Mr. Graves, Oct. 23, 1754.

It is certainly some argument of a peculiarity in the esteem I bear you, that I feel a readiness to acquaint you with more of my foibles than I care to trust with any other person. I believe nothing shews us more plainly either the different degrees or kinds of regard that we entertain for our several friends (I may also add the difference of their characters), than the ordinary style and tenor of the letters we address to them.

I confess to you, that I am considerably mortified by Mr. John W—'s conduct in regard to my letters to his brother; and, rather than they should have been so unnecessarily destroyed, would have given more money than it is allowable for me to mention with decency. I look upon my letters as some of my *chef-d'œuvres*; and, could I be supposed to have the least pretensions to propriety of style or sentiment, I should imagine it must appear, principally in my letters to his brother, and one or two more friends. I considered them as the records of a friendship that will be always dear to me, and as the history of my mind for these twenty years last past. The amusement I should have found in the perusal of them would have been altogether innocent; and I would gladly have preserved them, if it were only to explain those which I shall preserve of his brother's. Why he should allow either me or them so very little weight as not to consult me with regard to them, I can by no means conceive. I suppose it is not uncustomary to return them to the surviving friend. I had no answer to the letter which I wrote Mr. J. W—. I received a ring from him; but as I thought it an inadequate memorial of the friendship which his brother had for me, I gave it to my servant the moment I received it; at the same time I have a neat standish, on which I caused the lines Mr. W— left with it to be inscribed, and which appears to be a much more agreeable remembrancer.

I have read your new production with pleasure; and as this letter begins with a confession of foibles, I will own, that through mere laziness I have sent you back your copy in which I have made some erasements, instead of giving you my reasons on which those erasements were founded. Truth is, it seems to me to want mighty few variations from what is now the present text; and that, upon one more perusal, you will be able to give it as much perfection as you mean it to have. And yet, did I suppose you would insert it in Dodsley's Collection, as I see no reason you have to the contrary, I would take any pains about it that you would desire me. I must beg another copy, at your leisure.

I should like the inscription you mention upon a real stone-urn, which you purchase very reasonable at Bath: but you must not risque it upon the vase you mention, on any account whatever.

Now I mention Bath, I must acquaint you, that I have received intelligence from the younger Dodsley, that his brother is now there, and that none of the papers I sent him are yet sent to press; that he expects his brother home about the fourth or fifth of November, when he proceeds with his publication. Possibly you may go to Bath whilst he is there, and, if so, may choose to have an interview.

I shall send two or three little pieces of my own, in hopes that you will adjust the reading, and return them as soon as you conveniently can. All I can send to-

night is this "Ode to Memory." I shall in the last place desire your opinion as to the manner of placing what is sent. The first pages of his Miscellany must be already fixed. I think to propose ours for the last; but as to the order, it will depend entirely upon you.

Adieu! in other words, God bless you!—I have company at the table all the time I am writing. Your ever most affectionate, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Nov. 14, 1735.

You use me very cruelly: you have sent me but one letter since I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me sensible how great my loss is in not having more. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your hand-writing; next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you. Really and sincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to answer my last letter. I hope this will have better success in behalf of your quondam school-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

> Thro' many a flowery path and shelly grot,
> Where learning lull'd us in her private maze.

The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view. Consider me very seriously here in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves Doctors and Masters of Arts; a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; consider me, I say, in this melancholy light, and then think if something be not due to yours, &c.

P. S. I desire you will send me soon, and truly and positively, * a history of your own time.

* Alluding to his grandfather's history.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

Permit me again to write to you, though I have so long neglected my duty, and forgive my brevity, when I tell you it is occasioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleasure than the sight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furthest. I do not wonder in the least at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and I am obliged to your goodness for softening so harsh an appellation. When we meet it will, however, be my greatest of pleasures to know what you do, what you read, and how you spend your time, &c. &c. and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do not, &c. for almost all the employment of my hours may be best explained by negatives; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business; and yet neither something nor nothing gives me any pleasure. When you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill, only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress, and gets some ground; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was; I may better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this; in short, I believe I must not send you the history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the reformation†. However, as the most undeserving people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you

† Carrying on the allusion to the other history written by Mr. West's grandfather.

will

will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

For this little while past I have been playing with Statius; we yesterday had a game of quoits together; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation*, which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the poem, nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to shew you how I mispend my days.

Third in the labours of the Disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;
Artful and strong he pois'd the well-known weight,
By Phlegyas warn'd, and firm'd by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he try'd before he flung,
Brac'd all his nerves, and every sinew strung;
Then with a tempest's whirl and wary eye,
Pursu'd his cast, and hurl'd the orb on high;
The orb on high tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory.
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall,
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heav'd the craggy rock;
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,
And parting surges round the vessel roar;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses scap'd his giant arm.
A tyger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay,
A shining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold, &c.

* This consisted of about 110 lines, which were sent separately, and as it was Mr. Gray's first attempt in English verse, it is a curiosity not to be entirely withheld from the reader.

hyper-critical memory. In the mean while,

And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold,

is exactly Statius—*Summos auro mansuefecerat ungues*. I never knew before that the golden fangs on hammer-cloths were so old a fashion. Your Hymeneal † I was told was the best in the Cambridge Collection before I saw it, and indeed, it is no great compliment to tell you I thought it so when I had seen it, but sincerely it pleased me best. Methinks the college bards have run into a strange taste on this occasion. Such soft unmeaning stuff about Venus and Cupid, and Peleus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue, it has been condemned and beheaded by our Westminster judges; an exordium of about sixteen lines absolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a most barbarous manner. I will send it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in exclusion of the pretender, who has the impudence to appear under my name.

As yet I have not looked into Sir Isaac. Public disputations I hate: mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy, have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting thing in the world, "*ac* "*dulce otium & pœne omni negotio pul-* "*chrius*." I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER XXX.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ-Church, May 24, 1736.

I AGREE with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon: I must insist on seeing the rest of your translation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wise and severe, and put on an inflexible face, such as becomes the character of a true son of Aristarchus, of

† Published in the Cambridge Collection of Verses on the Prince of Wales's Marriage.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Peterhouse, Dec. 1736.

YOU must know that I do not take degrees, and, after this term, shall have nothing more of college impertinencies to undergo, which I trust will be some pleasure to you, as it is a great one to me. I have endured lectures daily and hourly since I came last, supported by the hopes of being shortly at full liberty to give myself up to my friends and classical companions, who, poor souls! though I see them fallen into great contempt with

most people here, yet I cannot help sticking to them, and out of a spirit of obstinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and indeed, what can I do else? Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas, I cannot see in the dark; nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics? Alas, I cannot see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four, but I would not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it. The people I behold all around me, it seems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inspires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was of this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon, that the Prophet spoke when he said, "the wild "beasts of the desert shall dwell there, "and their houses shall be full of dole- "ful creatures, and owls shall build "there, and satyrs shall dance there; "their forts and towers shall be a den "for ever, a joy of wild asses; there "shall the great owl make her nest, and "lay and hatch and gather under her "shadow; it shall be a court of dra- "gons; the screech-owl also shall rest "there, and find for herself a place of "rest." You see here is a pretty collection of desolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle, and perhaps it may also allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles; however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your spirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp, I have no more to say. We all must submit to that wayward queen; I too in no small degree own her sway,

I feel her influence while I speak her power.

But if it be a real distemper, pray take more care of your health, if not for your own, at least for our sakes, and do not be so soon weary of this little world: I do not know what refined friendships you may have contracted in the other, but pray do not be in a hurry to see your acquaintance above; among your terrestrial familiars, however, though I say it that should not say it, there positively is not one that has a greater esteem for you than yours most sincerely, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Dec. 22, 1736.

I CONGRATULATE you on your being about to leave college, and rejoice much you carry no degrees with you. For I would not have you dignified, and I not, for the world, you would have insulted me so. My eyes, such as they are, like yours, are neither metaphysical nor mathematical; I have, nevertheless, a great respect for your connoisseurs that way, but am always contented to be their humble admirer. Your collection of desolate animals pleased me much; but Oxford, I can assure you, has her owls that match yours, and the prophecy has certainly a squint that way. Well, you are leaving this dismal land of bondage, and which way are you turning your face? Your friends, indeed, may be happy in you, but what will you do with your classic companions? An inn of court is as horrid a place as a college, and a moot case is as dear to gentle dulness as a syllogism. But wherever you go, let me beg you not to throw poetry "like a "nauseous weed away:" cherish its sweets in your bosom, they will serve you now and then to correct the disgusting sober follies of the common law: *misce stultitiam consiliis brevem, dulce est desipere in loco*; so said Horace to Virgil, those two sons of Anac in poetry, and so say I to you, in this degenerate land of pigmies,

Mix with your grave designs a little pleasure,
Each day of business has its hour of leisure.

In one of these hours, I hope, dear Sir, you will sometimes think of me, write to me, and know me yours,

Ἐξαυδα, μή κ' ὕθεν νόῳ, ἵνα ἔνδομεν αμφω,

that is, write freely to me and openly, as I do to you; and to give you a proof of it I have sent you an elegy of Tibullus translated. Tibullus, you must know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excels him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reason I choose so melancholy a kind of poesie, is because my low spirits and constant ill health (things in me not imaginary, as you surmise, but too real, alas! and I fear, constitutional) "have tun'd my heart

to

to "elegies of woe;" and this likewise is the reason why I am the most irregular thing alive at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call discipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticise it unmercifully, for I send it with that intent. Indeed your late translation of Statius might have deterred me, but I know you are not more able to excel others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, especially when it is found in the productions of your most sincere friend.

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Peterhouse, Dec. 23, 1736.

You can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me sensible of your kindness; since that has been the only idea of any social happiness that I have almost ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking so differently from you in such cases) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneasinesses mixed with it: but it would be unjust to imagine my taste was any rule for yours; for which reason my letters are shorter and less frequent than they would be, had I any materials but myself to entertain you with. Love and brown sugar must be a poor regale for one of your *goût*, and alas! you know I am by trade a grocer*. Scandal (if I had any) is a merchandise you do not profess dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps slip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monsters appertaining to this climate you have seen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumscribed, and the whole contents of my share in our correspondence may be reduced under the two heads of 1st, You, 2dly, I; the first is, indeed, a subject to expatiate upon, but you might laugh at me for talking about what I do not understand; the second is so tiny, so tiresome, that you shall hear no more of it than that it is ever yours.

* i. e. A man who deals only in coarse and ordinary wares.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, July 4, 1737.

I have been very ill, and am still hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy 5th, Book the 3d, of Tibullus, *Vos tenet*, &c. and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in sickness, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy and this melancholy letter I turned into a more melancholy epistle of my own, during my sickness, in the way of imitation; and this I send to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for it cannot, but merely to shew them how sincere I was when sick: I hope my sending it to them now may convince them I am no less sincere, though perhaps more simple, when well†.

† See the poem [Ad Amicos] in Elegant Extracts in Verse.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, Aug. 22, 1737.

After a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's despair, at Cambridge, I am come to town, and to better hopes of seeing you. If what you sent me last be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours? For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed; though, if I were self-interested, I ought to wish for the continuance of any thing that could be the occasion of so much pleasure to me. Low spirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh with me; but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they must undergo the fate of all humble companions, and be discarded. Would I could turn them to the same use

that you have done, and make an Apollo of them. If they could write such verses with me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor all that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's widow, should persuade me to part with them: but, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account, obliges me to have done, in reminding you that I am yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

September, 1737.

I WAS hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you; suffice it that I arrived safe * at my uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do, may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous: both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds,

And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
In murmuring sounds, the dark decrees of fate;

While visions, as poetic eyes avow,
Cling to each leaf and swarm on every bough,

At the foot of one of these squats me *(il penseroso)*, and there I grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and sportive squirrel gambol around me like Adam in Paradise, before he had an Eve; but I think he did not use to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situation I often converse with my Horace, aloud too, that is talk to you, but I do not remember that I ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old†, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in town in about three weeks. Adieu.

* At Burnham in Buckinghamshire.

LETTER XXXVII.

From the same to the same‡.

Burnham, Sept. 1737.

I SYMPATHIZE with you in the sufferings which you foresee are coming upon you. We are both at present, I imagine, in no very agreeable situation; for my part, I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do, but it is a misfortune which, thank my stars, I can pretty well bear. You are in a confusion of wine, and roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and Heaven be praised, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more I believe we shall not much repine. I imagine, however, you will rather chuse to converse with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of still life to the realities of a noisy one, and, as I

† He lived nine years longer, and died at the great age of eighty-six. Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the same time that he blamed his ill taste for mixing them so injudiciously with farce, in order to produce that monstrous species of composition called Tragi-comedy.

‡ Mr. Walpole was at this time with his father at Houghton. Mr. Gray writes from his uncle's house in Buckinghamshire.

guess,

guess, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will stick yourself up as formal as if you had been fixed in your frame for these hundred years, with a pink or rose in one hand, and a great seal ring on the other. Your name, I assure you, has been propagated in these countries by a convert of yours, one ——; he has brought over his whole family to you; they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are absolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the parish but knows exactly the dimensions of the hall and saloon at Houghton, and begin to believe that the lanthorn * is not so great a consumer of the fat of the land as disaffected persons have said; for your reputation, we keep to ourselves your not hunting nor drinking hogan, either of which here would be sufficient to lay your honour in the dust. To-morrow se'nnight I hope to be in town, and not long after at Cambridge, I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Christ Church, Dec. 2, 1738.

RECEIVING no answer to my last letter, which I writ above a month ago, I must own I am a little uneasy. The slight shadow of you which I had in town, has only served to endear you to me the more. The moments I past with you made a strong impression upon me. I singled you out for a friend, and I would have you know me to be yours, if you deem me worthy.—Alas, Gray, you cannot imagine how miserably my time passes away. My health and nerves and spirits are, thank my stars, the very worst, I think, in Oxford. Four-and-twenty hours of pure unalloyed health together are as unknown to me as the 400,000 characters in the Chinese vocabulary. One of my complaints has of late been so over-civil as to visit me regularly once a month—*jam certus conviva.* This is a painful nervous head-ach, which perhaps you have sometimes heard me speak of before. Give me leave to say, I find no physic comparable to your letters. If, as it is said in Ecclesiasticus, "Friendship be the physic of the mind," prescribe to me, dear Gray, as often and as much as you think proper, I shall be a most obedient patient.

Non ego
Fidis irascar medicis, offendar amicis.

I venture here to write you down a Greek epigram†, which I lately turned into Latin, and hope you will excuse it.

Perspicui puerum ludentem in margine rivi
Immersit vitreæ limpidus error aquæ:
At gelidi ut mater moribundum e flumine traxit
Gredula, & amplexu fanus inane fovet;
Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, somno
Languidus, æternùm lumina composuit.

Adieu! I am going to my tutor's lectures on one Puffendorff, a very jurisprudent author as you shall read on a summer's day. Believe me yours, &c.

* A favourite object of Tory satire at the time.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Dartmouth-street, Feb. 21, 1737-8.

I OUGHT to answer you in Latin, but I feel I dare not enter the list with you—*cupidum, pater optime, vires deficiunt.*—Seriously, you write in that language with a grace and an Augustan urbanity that amazes me: your Greek too is perfect in its kind. And here let me wonder that a man, *longè Græcorum doctissimus*, should be at a loss for the verse and chapter whence my epigram is taken. I am sorry I have not my Aldus with me, that I might satisfy your curiosity; but he with all my other literary folks are left at Oxford, and therefore you must still rest in suspense. I thank you again and again for your medical prescription. I know very well that those "*risus, fes-*" *tivitates & facetiæ*" would contribute greatly to my cure, but then you must be my apothecary as well as physician, and make up the dose as well as direct it; send me, therefore, an electuary of these drugs, made up *secundùm artem*, "*et* "*eris mihi magnus Apollo*," in both his capacities as a god of poets and god of physicians. Wish me joy of leaving my college, and leave yours as fast as you can. I shall be settled at the Temple very soon.

† Of Posidippus. *Vide* Anthologia, H. Stephan. p. 220.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

August 1738.

My dear Sir, I should say Mr. Inspector General of the exports and imports*; but that appellation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monosyllables above written, for

Non benè conveniunt nec in unâ sede morantur Majestas & amor.

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Custom-house. However, by what style, title, or denomination soever you choose to be dignified or distinguished hereafter, these three words will stick by you like a bur, and you can no more get quit of these and your christian name than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at present (which you are pleased to ask after) are much like those of a pendulum or (Dr. Longically † speaking) oscillatory. I swing from chapel or hall home, and from home to chapel or hall. All the strange incidents that happen in my journies and returns I shall be sure to acquaint you with; the most wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly; this has refreshed the prospect, as the way for the most part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at some distance, castles, I presume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I suspect, the works of Julius Cæsar's army, for they still preserve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and, if they were not so near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at present several rivulets to be crossed, and which serve to enlighten the view all around. The country is exceedingly fruitful in ravens and such black cattle; but not to tire you with my travels, I abruptly conclude yours, &c.

* Mr. Walpole was just named to that post, which he exchanged soon after for that of Usher of the Exchequer.

† Dr. Long, the master of Pembroke-Hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philosophy.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

Sept. 1738.

I am coming away all so fast, and leaving behind me, without the least remorse, all the beauties of Sturbidge fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all is one for that; I shall not once visit them, nor so much as take my leave. The university has published a severe edict against schismatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little proctorlings to see its order executed, being under mighty apprehensions lest Henley‡ and his gilt tub should come to the fair and seduce their young ones: but their pains are to small purpose, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

I am at this instant in the very agonies of leaving college, and would not wish the worst of my enemies a worse situation. If you knew the dust, the old boxes, the bedsteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my resolution and unconcernedness in the midst of evils. I fill up my paper with a loose sort of version of that scene in *Pastor Fido* that begins, *Care selve beati.*

LETTER XLII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Sept. 17, 1738.

I thank you again and again for your two last most agreeable letters. They could not have come more a-propos; I was without any books to divert me, and they supplied the want of every thing: I made them my classics in the country, they were my Horace and Tibullus—*Non ita loquor assentandi causâ ut probè nosti si me noris, verum quia sic mea est sententia.* I am but just come to town, and, to shew you my esteem of your favours, I venture to send you by the penny-post, to your father's, what you will find on the next page; I hope it will reach you soon after your arrival, your boxes out of the waggon, yourself out of the coach, and tutors out of your memory.

Adieu; we shall see one another, I hope, to-morrow.

‡ Orator Henley.

LETTER XLIII.

From the same to the same.

Temple, Sept. 28, 1739.

If wishes could turn to realities, I would fling down my Law books, and sup with you to-night. But, alas! here am I doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleasures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I cannot help indulging a few natural desires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhone, and to be climbing up Mount Fourviere;

Jam mens prætrepidans avet vagari:
Jam læti studio pedes vigescunt.

However, so long as I am not deprived of your correspondence, so long shall I always find some pleasure in being at home. And, setting all vain curiosity aside, when the fit is over, and my reason begins to come to herself, I have several other powerful motives which might easily cure me of my restless inclinations: amongst these, my mother's ill state of health is not the least; which was the reason of our going to Tunbridge, so that you cannot expect much description or amusement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diversions there may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleased to publish certain Tunbrigiana this season; but such ana! I believe there were never so many vile little verses put together before. So much for Tunbridge. London affords me as little to say. What! so huge a town as London? Yes, consider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay world or high world, and consequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The busy world I leave to the busy; and am resolved never to talk politics till I can act at the same time. To tell old stories, or prate of old books, seems a little musty; and *toujours Chapon bouilli*, will not do. However, for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

O mea jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ fere ægretum soluta es levare
Pectus, et sensim ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:
Quid cenes? quanto Lyra die furore
Gesties, quando hâc reducem sodalem
Glauciam gaudere simul videbis.*
Mêque sub umbrâ?

LETTER XLIV.

From the same to the same.

Popes, March 28, 1742.

I WRITE to make you write, for I have not much to tell you. I have recovered no spirits as yet; but, as I am not displeased with my company, I sit purring by the fire-side in my arm-chair with no small satisfaction. I read too sometimes, and have begun Tacitus, but have not yet read enough to judge of him; only his Pannonian sedition in the first book of his annals, which is just as far as I have got, seemed to me a little tedious. I have no more to say, but to desire you will write letters of a handsome length, and always answer me within a reasonable space of time, which I leave to your discretion.

P. S. The new Dunciad! *qu'en pensez vous?*

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

I TRUST to the country, and that easy indolence you say you enjoy there, to restore you your health and spirits; and doubt not but, when the sun grows warm enough to tempt you from your fire-side, you will (like all other things) be the better for his influence. He is my old friend, and an excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not been for him, life had often been to me intolerable. Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all authors in the world, can be tedious. An annalist, you know, is by no means master of his subject; and I think one may venture to say, that if those Pannonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in another's they would have been insupportable. However, fear not, they will soon be over, and he will make ample amends.

* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verse, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.

A man,

A man, who could join the brilliant of wit and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection and good sense of the best moderns, cannot choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit of liberty that every now and then breaks out, as it, were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his Agricola that (concise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that general, where he had made him co-heir with his wife and daughter, "*Satis constabat "lætatum eum, velut honore judicioque: "tam cæca & corrupta mens assiduis "adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono "patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum "principem.*"

As to the Dunciad, it is greatly admired: the Genii of operas and schools, with their attendants, the pleas of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of Dulness in the end, are as fine as any thing he has written. The Metaphysician's part is to me the worst; and here and there a few ill-expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of Agrippina; much too long, but I could be glad you would retrench it. Aceronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which had twenty-five acts and some odd scenes.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, April, Thursday.

You are the first who ever made a muse of a cough; to me it seems a much more easy task to verify in one's sleep, (that indeed you were of old famous for*) than for want of it. Not the wakeful nightingale (when she had a cough) ever sung so sweetly. I give you thanks for your warble, and wish you could sing yourself to rest. These wicked remains of your illness will sure give way to warm weather and gentle exercise; which I hope you will not omit as the season advances. Whatever low spirits and indolence, the effect of them, may advise to the contrary, I pray you add five steps to your walk daily for my sake; by the help of which, in a month's time, I propose to set you on horseback.

I talked of the Dunciad as concluding you had seen it; if you have not, do you choose I should get and send it to you? I have myself, upon your recommendation, been reading Joseph Andrews. The incidents are ill laid and without invention: but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases even in her lowest shapes. Parson Adams is perfectly well; so is Mrs. Slip-slop, and the story of Wilson; and throughout he shews himself well read in stage coaches, country squires, inns, and inns of court. His reflections upon high people and low people, and misses and masters, are very good. However the exaltedness of some minds (or rather, as I shrewdly suspect, their insipidity and want of feeling or observation) may make them insensible to these light things (I mean such as characterise and paint nature), yet surely they are as weighty and much more useful than your grave discourses upon the mind†, the passions, and what not. Now, as the paradisaical pleasures of the Mahometans consist in playing upon the flute and lying with Houris, be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon.

You are very good in giving yourself the trouble to read and find fault with my long harangues. Your freedom (as you call it) has so little need of apologies, that I should scarce excuse you treating me any otherwise; which, whatever compliment it might be to my vanity, would be making a very ill one to my understanding. As to matter of style, I have this to say: the language of the age is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one

* At Eton School.

† He seems here to glance at Hutchinson, the disciple of Shaftesbury; of whom he had not a much better opinion than of his master.

that

that has written, has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives; nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been great creators this way; and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former. Let me give you some instances from Dryden, whom every body reckons a great master of our poetical tongue. Full of *museful mopings*—unlike the *trim* of love—a pleasant *beverage*—a *roundelay* of love—stood silent in his *mood*—with knots and *knares* deformed—his *ireful mood*—in proud *array*—his *boon* was granted—*disarray* and shameful rout—*wayward* but wise—*furbished* for the field—the *foiled doddered* oaks—*disherited*—*smouldering* flames—*retchless* of laws—*crones* old and ugly—the *beldam* at his side—the *grandam-hag*—*villanize* his father's fame.——But they are infinite: and our language not being a settled thing (like the French), has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this, than in those other great excellencies you mention. Every word in him is a picture. Pray, put me the following lines into the tongue of our modern dramatics;

But I that am not shap'd for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass:
I, that am rudely stampt, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph:
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up—

and what follows. To me they appear untranslateable; and if this be the case, our language is greatly degenerated. However, the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far; and is no sort of excuse for sentiments ill-suited, or speeches ill-timed, which I believe is a little the case with me. I guess the most faulty expressions may be these—*silken*—son of *dalliance*—*drowsier* pretensions—wrinkled *beldams*—*arched* the hearer's brow and *riveted* his eyes in *fearful extasie*. These are easily altered or omitted; and indeed if the thoughts be wrong or superfluous, there is nothing easier than to leave out the whole. The first ten or twelve lines are, I believe, the best *; and as for the rest, I was betrayed into a good deal of it by Tacitus: only what he has said in five words, I imagine I have said in fifty lines: such is the misfortune of imitating the inimitable. Now, if you are of my opinion, *una litura* may do the business better than a dozen; and you need not fear unravelling my web. I am a sort of spider; and have little else to do but spin it over again, or creep to some other place and spin there. Alas! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself. I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks. But no matter; it makes the hours pass; and is better than ὑ ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ ἀμοιρίᾳ καταζῆναι. Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

To begin with the conclusion of your letter, which is Greek, I desire that you will quarrel no more with your manner of passing your time. In my opinion it is irreproachable, especially as it produces such excellent fruit; and if I, like a saucy bird, must be pecking at it, you ought to consider that it is because I like it. No *una litura* I beg you, no unravelling of your web, dear Sir! only pursue it a little farther, and then one shall be able to judge of it a little better. You know the crisis of a play is in the first act; its damnation or salvation wholly rests there. But till that first act is over, every body suspends his vote; so how do you think I can form, as yet, any just idea of the speeches in regard to their length or shortness? the connexion and symmetry of such little parts with one another must naturally escape me, as not having the plan of the whole in my head; neither can I decide about the thoughts, whether they are wrong or superfluous; they may have some future tendency which I perceive

* The lines which he means here are from—*thus ever grave and undisturb'd reflection—to Rubellius lives.* For the part of the scene, which he sent in his former letter, begin there.

not.

not. The style only was free to me, and there I find we are pretty much of the same sentiment: for you say the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far; I say as much and no more. For old words we know are old gold, provided they are well chosen. Whatever Ennius was, I do not consider Shakespear as a dunghill in the least: on the contrary, he is a mine of ancient ore, where all our great modern poets have found their advantage. I do not know how it is; but his old expressions have more energy in them than ours, and are even more adapted to poetry; certainly, where they are judiciously and sparingly inserted, they add a certain grace to the composition; in the same manner as Poussin gave a beauty to his pictures by his knowledge in the ancient proportions: but should he, or any other painter, carry the imitation too far, and neglect that best of models, Nature, I am afraid it would prove a very flat performance. To finish this long criticism: I have this farther notion about old words revived, (is not this a pretty way of finishing?) I think them of excellent use in tales; they add a certain drollery to the comic, and a romantic gravity to the serious, which are both charming, in their kind; and this way of charming Dryden understood very well. One need only read Milton to acknowledge the dignity they give the Epic. But now comes my opinion that they ought to be used in tragedy more sparingly than in most kinds of poetry. Tragedy is designed for public representation, and what is designed for that should be certainly most intelligible. I believe half the audience that come to Shakespear's plays do not understand the half of what they hear.—But *finissons enfin*.—Yet one word more.—You think the ten or twelve first lines the best, now I am for the fourteen last; add, that they contain not one word of ancientry.

I rejoice you found amusement in Joseph Andrews. But then I think your conceptions of Paradise a little upon the Bergerac. *Les Lettres de Seraphim R. a Madame la Cherubinesse de Q.* What a piece of extravagance would there be!

And now you must know that my body continues weak and enervate. And for my animal spirits, they are in perpetual fluctuation: some whole days I have no relish, no attention for any thing: at other times I revive, and am capable of writing a long letter, as you see; and though I do not write speeches, yet I translate them. When you understand what speech, you will own that it is a bold, and perhaps a dull attempt. In three words, it is prose, it is from Tacitus, it is of Germanicus. Peruse, perpend, pronounce.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, April 1742.

I should not have failed to answer your letter immediately, but I went out of town for a little while, which hindered me. Its length (besides the pleasure naturally accompanying a long letter from you) affords me a new one, when I think it is a symptom of the recovery of your health, and flatter myself that your bodily strength returns in proportion. Pray do not forget to mention the progress you make continually. As to Agrippina, I begin to be of your opinion; and find myself (as women are of their children) less enamoured of my productions the older they grow. She is laid up to sleep till next summer; so bid her good night. I think you have translated Tacitus very justly, that is, freely; and accommodated his thoughts to the turn and genius of our language; which, though I commend your judgment, is no commendation of the English tongue, which is too diffuse, and daily grows more and more enervate. One shall never be more sensible of this, than in turning an author like Tacitus. I have been trying it in some parts of Thucydides (who has a little resemblance of him in his conciseness), and endeavoured to do it closely, but found it produced mere nonsense. If you have any inclination to see what figure Tacitus makes in Italian, I have a Tuscan translation of Davanzati, much esteemed in Italy; and will send you the same speech you sent me; that is, if you care for it. In the mean time accept of Propertius*.

* A translation of the 1st elegy of the 2d book in English rhyme.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Popes, May 5, 1742.

WITHOUT any preface I come to your verses, which I read over and over with excessive pleasure, and which are at least as good as Propertius. I am only sorry you follow the blunders of Broukhusius, all whose insertions are nonsense. I have some objections to your antiquated words, and am also an enemy to Alexandrines; at least I do not like them in Elegy. But after all, I admire your translation so extremely, that I cannot help repeating I long to shew you some little errors you are fallen into by following Broukhusius. Were I with you now, and Propertius with your verses lay upon the table between us, I could discuss this point in a moment; but there is nothing so tiresome as spinning out a criticism in a letter; doubts arise, and explanations follow, till there swells out at least a volume of undigested observations: and all because you are not with him whom you want to convince. Read only the Letters between Pope and Cromwell in proof of this; they dispute without end. Are you aware now that I have an interest all this while in banishing criticism from our correspondence? Indeed I have; for I am going to write down a little Ode (if it deserves the name) for your perusal, which I am afraid will hardly stand that test.

LETTER L.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, May 8, 1742.

YOU see, by what I sent you, that I converse, as usual, with none but the dead: they are my old friends, and almost make me long to be with them. You will not wonder, therefore, that I who live only in times past, am able to tell you no news of the present. I have finished the Peloponnesian war much to my honour, and a tight conflict it was, I promise you. I have drank and sung with Anacreon for the last fortnight, and am now feeding sheep with Theocritus. Besides, to quit my figure (because it is foolish), I have run over Pliny's Epistles and Martial ἐκ παρέργου; not to mention Petrarch, who, by the way, is sometimes very tender and natural. I must needs tell you three lines in Anacreon, where the expression seems to me inimitable. He is describing hair as he would have it painted.

Ἔλικας δ' ἐλευθέρας μοι
Πλοκάμων ἀτάκτα συνθεὶς
Ἄφες ὡς θέλουσι κεῖσθαι.

Guess, too, where this is about a dimple.

Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digitulo
Vestigio demonstrant mollitudinem.

LETTER LI.

Mr. West to Mr. Gray.

Popes, May 11, 1742.

YOUR fragment is in Aulus Gellius: and both it and your Greek delicious. But why are you thus melancholy? I am so sorry for it, that you see I cannot forbear writing again the very first opportunity; though I have little to say, except to expostulate with you about it. I find you converse much with the dead, and I do not blame you for that; I converse with them too, though not indeed with the Greek. But I must condemn you for your longing to be with them. What, are there no joys among the living? I could almost cry out with Catullus, "*Alphene immemor, atque unanimis false sodalibus!*" But to turn an accusation thus upon another is ungenerous; so I will take my leave of you for the present with a "*Vale, et vive paulisper cum vivis.*"

LETTER LII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. West.

London, May 27, 1742.

MINE, you are to know, is a white melancholy, or rather leucocholy for the most part; which, though it seldom laughs or dances, nor ever amounts to what one calls joy or pleasure, yet is a good easy sort of a state, and *ça ne laisse que de s'amuser.* The only fault of it is insipidity; which is apt now and then to give a sort of *ennui,* which makes one form

form certain little wishes that signify nothing. But there is another sort, black indeed, which I have now and then felt, that has somewhat in it like Tertullian's rule of faith, *Credo, quia impossibile est*; for it believes, nay, is sure of every thing that is unlikely, so it be but frightful; and, on the other hand, excludes and shuts its eyes to the most possible hopes, and every thing that is pleasurable; from this the Lord deliver us! for none but he and sunshiny weather can do it. In hopes of enjoying this kind of weather, I am going into the country for a few weeks, but shall be never the nearer any society: so, if you have any charity, you will continue to write. My life is like Harry the Fourth's supper of hens: "*Poulets "a la broche, poulets en ragoût, poulets "en hachis, poulets en fricassées.*"—— Reading here, reading there; nothing but books with different sauces. Do not let me lose my dessert then; for though that be reading too, yet it has a very different flavour. The May seems to be come since your invitation; and I propose to bask in her beams and dress me in her roses.

Et caput in vernâ semper habere rosâ.

I shall see Mr. —— and his wife, nay, and his child too, for he has got a boy. Is it not odd to consider one's cotemporaries in the grave light of husband and father? There are my Lords —— and ——, they are statesmen; do not you remember them dirty boys playing at cricket? As for me, I am never a bit the older, nor the bigger, nor the wiser than I was then; no, not for having been beyond sea. Pray how are you?

LETTER LIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.*

Cambridge, December 27, 1742.

I OUGHT to have returned you my thanks a long time ago, for the pleasure, I should say prodigy, of your letter; for such a thing has not happened above twice within this last age to mortal man, and no one here can conceive what it may portend. You have heard, I suppose, how I have been employed a part of the time, how, by my own indefatigable application for these ten years past, and by the care and vigilance of that worthy magistrate the man in blue† (who, I assure you, has not spared his labour, nor could have done more for his own son), I am got half way to the top of jurisprudence‡, and bid as fair as another body to open a case of impotency with all decency and circumspection. You see my ambition. I do not doubt but some thirty years hence I shall convince the world and you that I am a very pretty young fellow; and may come to shine in a profession, perhaps the noblest of all except man-midwifery. As for you, if your distemper and you can but agree about going to London, I may reasonably expect in a much shorter time to see you in your three-cornered villa, doing the honours of a well-furnished table with as much dignity, as rich a mien, and as capacious a belly, as Dr. Mead. Methinks I see Dr. —, at the lower end of it, lost in admiration of your goodly person and parts, cramming down his envy (for it will rise) with the wing of a pheasant, and drowning it in neat Burgundy. But not to tempt your asthma too much with such a prospect, I should think you might be almost as happy and as great as this even in the country. But you know best, and I should be sorry to say any thing that might stop you in the career of glory; far be it from me to hamper the wheels of your gilded chariot. Go on, Sir Thomas; and when you die (for even physicians must die) may the faculty in Warwick-lane erect your statue in the very niche of Sir John Cutler's.

I was going to tell you how sorry I am for your illness, but I hope it is too late now: I can only say that I really was very sorry. May you live a hundred Christmasses, and eat as many collars of brawn stuck with rosemary. Adieu, &c.

* Of Old-park, near Durham. With this gentleman Mr. Gray contracted an acquaintance very early; and though they were not educated together at Eton, yet afterwards at Cambridge, when the Doctor was fellow of Pembroke-hall, they became intimate friends, and continued so to the time of Mr. Gray's death.

† A servant of the Vice Chancellor's for the time being, usually known by the name of Blue Coat, whose business it is to attend Acts for Degrees, &c.

‡ *i. e.* Batchelor of Civil Law.

LETTER LIV.

From the same to the same.

Peterhouse, April 26, 1744.

You write so feelingly to Mr. Brown, and represent your abandoned condition in terms so touching, that what gratitude could not effect in several months, compassion has brought about in a few days; and broke that strong attachment, or rather allegiance, which I and all here owe to our sovereign lady and mistress, the president of presidents and head of heads (if I may be permitted to pronounce her name, that ineffable Octogrammaton), the power of Laziness. You must know she had been pleased to appoint me (in preference to so many old servants of hers who had spent their whole lives in qualifying themselves for the office) grand picker of straws and push-pin player to her Supinity (for that is her title). The first is much in the nature of Lord President of the Council; and the other like the groom-porter, only without the profit; but as they are both things of very great honour in this country, I considered with myself the load of envy attending such great charges; and besides (between you and me), I found myself unable to support the fatigue of keeping up the appearance that persons of such dignity must do; so I thought proper to decline it, and excused myself as well as I could. However, as you see such an affair must take up a good deal of time, and it has always been the policy of this court to proceed slowly, like the Imperial and that of Spain, in the dispatch of business, you will on this account the easier forgive me, if I have not answered your letter before.

You desire to know, it seems, what character the poem of your young friend bears here*. I wonder that you ask the opinion of a nation, where those, who pretend to judge, do not judge at all; and the rest (the wiser part) wait to catch the judgment of the world immediately above them; that is, Dick's and the Rainbow coffee-houses. Your readier way would be to ask the ladies that keep the bars in these two theatres of criticism. However, to shew you that I am a judge, as well as my countrymen, I will tell you, though I have rather turned it over than read it (but no matter; no more have they), that it seems to me above the middling; and now and then, for a little while, rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure, and even unintelligible; and too much infected with the Hutchinson jargon. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at least nine years too early. And so methinks in a few words, "*a la mode du Temple*," I have very pertly dispatched what perhaps may for several years have employed a very ingenious man worth fifty of myself.

You are much in the right to have a taste for Socrates; he was a divine man. I must tell you, by way of news of the place, that the other day a certain new professor made an apology for him an hour long in the schools; and all the world brought in Socrates guilty, except the people of his own college.

The muse is gone, and left me in far worse company; if she returns, you will hear of her. As to her child† (since you are so good as to inquire after it), it is but a puling chit yet, not a bit grown to speak of; I believe, poor thing, it has got the worms that will carry it off at last. Mr. Trollope and I are in a course of tar-water; he for his present, and I for my future distempers. If you think it will kill me, send away a man and horse directly; for I drink like a fish. Yours, &c.

* Pleasures of the Imagination: from the posthumous publication of Dr. Akenside's Poems, it should seem that the author had very much the same opinion afterwards of his own work, which Mr. Gray here expresses; since he undertook a reform of it, which must have given him, had he concluded it, as much trouble as if he had written it entirely new.

LETTER LV.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, Dec. 11, 1746.

I would make you an excuse (as indeed I ought) if they were a sort of thing I ever gave any credit to myself in these cases; but I know they are never

† He here means his Poem "*De Principiis Cogitandi.*"

true. Nothing so silly as indolence when it hopes to disguise itself: every one knows it by its saunter, as they do his Majesty (God bless him) at a masquerade, by the firmness of his tread and the elevation of his chin. However, somewhat I had to say that has a little shadow of reason it. I have been in town (I suppose you know) flaunting about at all kind of public places with two friends lately returned from abroad. The world itself has some attractions in it to a solitary of six years standing; and agreeable well meaning people of sense (thank Heaven there are so few of them) are my peculiar magnet. It is no wonder then if I felt some reluctance at parting with them so soon; or if my spirits, when I returned back to my cell, should sink for a time, not indeed to storm and tempest, but a good deal below changeable. Besides, Seneca says (and my pitch of philosophy does not pretend to be much above Seneca) "*Nunquam mores, "quos extuli, refero. Aliquid ex eo "quod composui, turbatur: aliquid ex "his, quæ fugavi, redit.*" And it will happen to such as us, mere imps of science. Well it may, when Wisdom herself is forced often

In sweet retired solitude
To plume her feathers, and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.

It is a foolish thing that without money one cannot either live as one pleases, or where and with whom one pleases. Swift somewhere says, that money is liberty; and I fear money is friendship too and society, and almost every external blessing. It is a great, though an ill-natured, comfort, to see most of those who have it in plenty, without pleasure, without liberty, and without friends.

I am not altogether of your opinion as to your historical consolation in time of trouble: a calm melancholy it may produce, a stiller sort of despair (and that only in some circumstances, and on some constitutions); but I doubt no real comfort or content can ever arise in the human mind, but from hope.

I take it very ill you should have been in the twentieth year of the war*, and yet say nothing of the retreat before Syracuse: is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life? And how does Xenophon or Plutarch agree with you? For my part, I read Aristotle, his poetics, politics, and morals; though I do not well know which is which. In the first place, he is the hardest author by far I ever meddled with. Then he has a dry conciseness, that makes one imagine one is perusing a table of contents rather than a book: it tastes for all the world like chopped hay, or rather like chopped logic; for he has a violent affection to that art, being in some sort his own invention; so that he often loses himself in little trifling distinctions and verbal niceties; and, what is worse, leaves you to extricate him as well as you can. Thirdly, he has suffered vastly from the transcribblers, as all authors of great brevity necessarily must. Fourthly and lastly, he has abundance of fine uncommon things, which make him well worth the pains he gives one. You see what you are to expect from him.

* Thucydides, l. vii.

LETTER LVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Cambridge, 1747.

I HAD been absent from this place a few days, and at my return found Cibber's book† upon my table: I return you my thanks for it, and have already run over a considerable part; for who could resist Mrs. Lætitia Pilkington's recommendation? (By the way is there any such gentlewoman‡? or has somebody put on the style of a scribbling woman's panegyric to deceive and laugh at Colley?) He seems to me full as pert and as dull as usual. There are whole pages of common-place stuff, that for stupidity might have been wrote by Dr. Waterland, or any other grave divine, did not the flirting saucy phrase give them at a distance an air of youth and gaiety; it is very true, he is often in the right with regard to Tully's weaknesses; but was there any one that did not see them? Those, I imagine, that would find a man after God's own heart, are no more likely to

† Entitled "Observations on Cicero's Character."

‡ This lady made herself more known some time after the date of this letter.

trust

trust the Doctor's recommendation than the Player's; and as to reason and truth, would they know their own faces, do you think, if they looked in the glass, and saw themselves so bedizened in tattered fringe and tarnished lace, in French jewels and dirty furbelows, the frippery of a stroller's wardrobe?

Literature, to take it in its most comprehensive sense, and include every thing that requires invention or judgment, or barely application and industry, seems indeed drawing apace to its dissolution, and remarkably since the beginning of the war. I remember to have read Mr. Spence's pretty book; though (as he then had not been at Rome for the last time) it must have increased greatly since that in bulk. If you ask me what I read, I protest I do not recollect one syllable; but only in general, that they were the best-bred sort of men in the world, just the kind of *frinds* one would wish to meet in a fine summer's evening, if one wished to meet any at all. The heads and tails of the dialogues, published separate in 16mo, would make the sweetest reading in *natiur* for young gentlemen of family and fortune, that are learning to dance. I rejoice to hear there is such a crowd of dramatical performances coming upon the stage. Agrippina can stay very well, she thanks you, and be damned at leisure: I hope in God you have not mentioned, or shewed to any body, that scene (for trusting in its badness, I forgot to caution you concerning it); but I heard the other day, that I was writing a play, and was told the name of it, which nobody here could know, I am sure. The employment you propose to me much better suits my inclination; but I much fear our joint-stock would hardly compose a small volume; what I have is less considerable than you would imagine, and of that little we should not be willing to publish all. * * *§.

This is all I can any where find. You, I imagine, may have a good deal more. I should not care how unwise the ordinary run of readers might think my affection for him, provided those few, that ever loved any body, or judged of any thing rightly, might, from such little remains, be moved to consider what he would have been; and to wish that Heaven had granted him a longer life and a mind more at ease.

I send you a few lines, though Latin, which you do not like, for the sake of the subject*; it makes part of a large design, and is the beginning of the fourth book, which was intended to treat of the passions. Excuse the three first verses; you know vanity, with the Romans, is a poetical licence.

LETTER LVII.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 1, 1747.

As one ought to be particularly careful to avoid blunders in a compliment of condolence, it would be a sensible satisfaction to me (before I testify my sorrow, and the sincere part I take in your misfortune) to know for certain, who it is I lament. I knew Zara and Selima (Selima, was it? or Fatima?) or rather I knew them both together; for I cannot justly say which was which. Then as to your handsome cat, the name you distinguish her by, I am no less at a loss, as well knowing one's handsome cat is always the cat one likes best; or, if one be alive and the other dead, it is usually the latter that is the handsomest. Besides, if the point were never so clear, I hope you do not think me so ill-bred or so imprudent as to forfeit all my interest in the survivor: Oh no! I would rather seem to mistake, and imagine to be sure it must be the tabby one that had met with this sad accident. Till this affair is a little better determined, you will excuse me if I do not begin to cry;

"*Tempus inane peto, requiem, spatiumque doloris.*"

Which interval is the more convenient, as it gives time to rejoice with you on your new honours†. This is only a beginning; I reckon next week we shall hear you are a free-mason, or gormogon at least. Heigh ho! I feel (as you to be sure have done long since) that I have very little to say, at least in prose. Somebody will be the better for it; I do not mean you, but your cat, *feuë Made-*

§ What is here omitted was a short catalogue of Mr. West's Poetry then in Mr. Gray's hands.

* The admirable apostrophe to Mr. West.

† Mr. Walpole was about this time elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

moiselle Selime, whom I am about to immortalize for one week or fortnight, as follows * * * * * || There's a Poem for you, it is rather too long for an Epitaph.

LETTER LVIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, June 5, 1748.

YOUR friendship has interested itself in my affairs so naturally, that I cannot help troubling you a little with a detail of them†. * * * * * * * And now, my dear Wharton, why must I tell you a thing so contrary to my own wishes and your's? I believe it is impossible for me to see you in the North, or to enjoy any of those agreeable hours I had flattered myself with. This business will oblige me to be in town several times during the summer, particularly in August, when half the money is to be paid; besides, the good people here would think me the most careless and ruinous of mortals, if I should take such a journey at this time. The only satisfaction I can pretend to, is that of hearing from you, and particularly at this time when I was bid to expect the good news of an increase of your family. Your opinion of Diodorus is doubtless right; but there are things in him very curious, got out of better authorities now lost. Do you remember the Egyptian history, and particularly the account of the gold mines? My own readings have been cruelly interrupted: what I have been highly pleased with, is the new Comedy from Paris by Gresset, called *le Mechant*; if you have it not, buy his works all together in two little volumes; they are collected by the Dutch booksellers, and consequently contain some trash; but then there are the Ververt, the Epistle to P. Bougeant, the Chartreuse, that to his sister, an Ode on his country, and another on Mediocrity, and the Sidnei, another Comedy, all which have great beauties. There is also a Poem lately published by Thomson, called the Castle of Indolence, with some good stanzas in it. Mr. Mason is my acquaintance; I liked that Ode‡ much, but have found no one else that did. He has much fancy, little judgment, and a good deal of modesty; I take him for a good and well meaning creature; but then he is really an simplicity a child, and loves every body he meets with: he reads little or nothing; writes abundance, and that with a design to make his fortune by it. My best compliments to Mrs Wharton and your family: does that name include any body I am not yet acquainted with?

|| The reader need hardly be told, that the 4th Ode in the Collection of his Poems was inserted in the place of these asterisks.

† The paragraph here omitted contained an account of Mr. Gray's loss of a house by fire in Cornhill, and the expence he should be at in rebuilding it. Though it was insured, he could at this time ill bear to lay out the additional sum necessary for the purpose.

LETTER LIX.

From the same to the same.

Stoke, August 19, 1748.

I AM glad you have had any pleasure in Gresset; he seems to me a truly elegant and charming writer; the Mechant is the best Comedy I ever read; his Edward I could scarce get through; it is puerile; though there are good lines, such as this, for example:

"*Le jour d'un nouveau regne est le jour des ingrats.*"

But good lines will make any thing rather than a good play; however, you are to consider this a collection made up by the Dutch booksellers; many things unfinished, or written in his youth, or designed not for the world, but to make his friends laugh, as the *Lutrin vivant*, &c. There are two noble lines, which, as they are in the middle of an Ode to the King, may perhaps have escaped you:

"*Le cri d'un peuple heureux est la seule eloquence,*
"*Qui sçait parler des Rois:*"

Which is very true, and should have been a hint to himself not to write Odes to the King at all.

As I have nothing more to say at present, I fill my paper with the beginning of an Essay; what name to give it I know not; but the subject is the Alliance of Education and Government: I mean

‡ Ode to a Water Nymph, published about this time in Dodsley's Miscellany.

to

to shew that they must both concur together to produce great and useful men. I desire your judgment upon it before I proceed any further.

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 9, 1748.

You ask for some account of books. The principal I can tell you of is a work of the President Montesquieu, the labour of twenty years; it is called L'Esprit des Loix, 2 vol. 4to. printed at Geneva. He lays down the principles on which are founded the three sorts of government, despotism, the limited monarchy, and the republican; and shews how from these are reduced the laws and customs by which they are guided and maintained; the education proper to each form; the influence of climate, situation, religion, &c. on the minds of particular nations and on their policy. The subject, you see, is as extensive as mankind; the thoughts perfectly new, generally admirable as they are just, sometimes a little too refined. In short, there are faults, but such as an ordinary man could never have committed. The style very lively and concise (consequently sometimes obscure); it is the gravity of Tacitus, whom he admires, tempered with the gaiety and fire of a Frenchman. The time of night will not suffer me to go on; but I will write again in a week.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, April 25, 1749.

I PERCEIVE that second parts are as hard to write as they can be to read; for this, which you ought to have had a week after the first, has been a full month in coming forth. The spirit of laziness (the spirit of the place) begins to possess even me, who have so long declaimed against it; yet has it not so prevailed, but that I feel that discontent with myself, that *ennui*, that ever accompanies it in its beginnings. Time will settle my conscience; time will reconcile me to this languid companion: we shall smoke, we shall tipple, we shall doze together: we shall have our little jokes like other people, and our old stories: brandy will finish what port began; and a month after the time you will see in some corner of a London Evening-Post, "Yesterday died the Reverend Mr. John "Gray, Senior Fellow of Clare-Hall, a "facetious companion, and well es-"pected by all that knew him. His "death is supposed to have been occa-"sioned by a fit of an apoplexy, being "found fallen out of bed with his head "in the chamber-pot."

In the mean while, to go on with my account of new books. Montesquieu's work, which I mentioned before, is now published anew in 2 vols. 8vo. Have you seen old Crebillion's Catalina, a tragedy, which has had a prodigious run at Paris? Historical truth is too much perverted in it, which is ridiculous in a story so generally known; but if you can get over this, the sentiments and versification are fine, and most of the characters (particularly the principal one) painted with great spirit.

Mr. Birch, the indefatigable, has just put out a thick octavo of original papers of Queen Elizabeth's time; there are many curious things in it, particularly letters from Sir Robert Cecil (Salisbury) about his negociations with Henry IV. of France, the Earl of Monmouth's odd account of Queen Elizabeth's death, several peculiarities of James I. and Prince Henry, &c. and above all, an excellent account of the state of France, with characters of the King, his court, and ministry, by Sir George Carew, ambassador there. This, I think, is all new worth mentioning, that I have seen or heard of; except a Natural History of Peru, in Spanish, printed at London, by Don ——— something, a man of learning, sent thither by that court on purpose.

You ask after my Chronology. It was begun, as I told you, almost two years ago, when I was in the midst of Diogenes Laertius and his philosophers, as a proœmium to their works. My intention in forming this table was not so much for public events, though these too have a column assigned them, but rather in a literary way to compare the time of all great men, their writings and their transactions. I have brought it from the 30th Olympiad, where it begins, to the

113th; that is, 332 years*. My only modern assistants were Marsham, Dodwell, and Bentley.

I have since that read Pausanias and Athanæus all through, and Æschylus again. I am now in Pindar and Lysias; for I take verse and prose together like bread and cheese.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Cambridge, Aug. 8, 1749.

I promised Dr. K—ene long since to give you an account of our magnificence here †; but the news-papers, and he himself in person, have got the start of my indolence, so that by this time you are well acquainted with all the events that adorn that week of wonders. Thus much I may venture to tell you, because it is probable nobody else has done it, that our friend ——'s zeal and eloquence surpassed all power of description. Vesuvio in an eruption was not more violent than his utterance, nor (since I am at my mountains) Pelion, with all its pine-trees in a storm of wind, more impetuous than his action; and yet the senate-house still stands, and (I thank God) we are all safe and well at your service. I was ready to sink for him, and scarce dared to look about me, when I was sure it was all over; but soon found I might have spared my confusion; all people joined to applaud him. Every thing was quite right; and I dare swear not three people here but think him a model of oratory; for all the Duke's little court came with a resolution to be pleased; and when the tone was once given, the university, who ever wait for the judgment of their betters, struck into it with an admirable harmony: for the rest of the performances, they were just what they usually are. Every one, while it lasted, was very gay and very busy in the morning, and very owlish and very tipsy at night; I make no exceptions from the Chancellor to Blue-coat. Mason's Ode was the only entertainment that had any tolerable elegance; and, for my own part, I think it (with some little abatements) uncommonly well on such an occasion. Pray let me know your sentiments; for doubtless you have seen it. The author of it grows apace into my good graces, as I know him more; he is very ingenious, with great good-nature and simplicity; a little vain, but in so harmless and so comical a way, that it does not offend one at all; a little ambitious, but withal so ignorant in the world and its ways, that this does not hurt him in one's opinion; so sincere and so undisguised, that no mind, with a spark of generosity, would ever think of hurting him, he lies so open to injury; but so indolent, that if he cannot overcome this habit, all his good qualities will signify nothing at all. After all, I like him so well, I could wish you knew him.

LETTER LXIII.

Mr. Gray to his Mother.

Cambridge, Nov. 7, 1749.

The unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me‡. I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and at last, when it was his pleasure, has taken her from us to himself: and perhaps, if we reflect upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of his goodness both to her, and to those that loved her. She might have languished many years before our eyes in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it; or per-

* This laborious work was formed much in the manner of the President Henault's "*Histoire de France.*" Every page consisted of nine columns; one for the Olympiad, the next for the Archons, the third for the public affairs of Greece, the three next for the Philosophers, and the three last for poets, historians, and orators.

† The Duke of Newcastle's installation as Chancellor of the University.

‡ The death of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Antrobus, who died the 5th of November, and was buried in a vault in Stoke church-yard near the chancel door, in which also his mother and himself (according to the direction in his will) were afterwards buried.

haps

haps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy; and has now more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope, and beg, you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to him who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not; if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

LETTER LXIV.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, August 9, 1750.

ARISTOTLE says (one may write Greek to you without scandal) that Οἱ τοποι οὐ διαλυ' ουσι την Φιλίαν ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἐὰν δὲ χρόνιος ἡ ἀπουσία γένηται καὶ τῆς Φιλίας δοκεῖ ληθὴν ποιεῖν. ὅθεν εἴρηται Πολλὰς δὴ Φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσεν. But Aristotle may say whatever he pleases, I do not find myself at all the worse for it. I could indeed wish to refresh my Ἐνέργεια a little at Durham by the sight of you, but when is there a probability of my being so happy? It concerned me greatly when I heard the other day that your asthma continued at times to afflict you, and that you were often obliged to go into the country to breathe; you cannot oblige me more than by giving me an account both of the state of your body and mind: I hope the latter is able to keep you cheerful and easy in spite of the frailties of its companion. As to my own, it can neither do one nor the other; and I have the mortification to find my spiritual part the most infirm thing about me. You have doubtless heard of the loss I have had in Dr. Middleton, whose house was the only easy place one could find to converse in at Cambridge: for my part I find a friend so uncommon a thing, that I cannot help regretting even an old acquaintance, which is an indifferent likeness of it; and though I do not approve the spirit of his books, methinks it is pity the world should lose so rare a thing as a good writer.

My studies cannot furnish a recommendation of many new books to you. There is a defence, "*de l'Esprit des Loix*," by Montesquieu himself; it has some lively things in it, but is very short, and his adversary appears to be so mean a bigot that he deserved no answer. There are 3 vols. in 4to. of "*Histoire du* "*Cabinet du Roy*, by Messrs. Buffon "and d'Aubenton;" the first is a man of character, but I am told has hurt it by this work. It is all a sort of introduction to natural history; the weak part of it is a love of system which runs through it; the most contrary thing in the world to a science entirely grounded upon experiments, and which has nothing to do with vivacity of imagination. However, I cannot help commending the general view which he gives of the face of the earth, followed by a particular one of all the known nations, their peculiar figure and manners, which is the best epitome of geography I ever met with, and written with sense and elegance; in short, these books are well worth turning over. The Memoirs of the Abbé de Mongon, in 5 vols. are highly commended, but I have not seen them. He was engaged in several embassies to Germany, England, &c. during the course of the late war. The president Henault's "*Abregé Chronologique de l'Histoire de* "*France*," I believe I have before mentioned to you as a very good book of its kind.

LETTER LXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Cambridge, Feb. 11, 1751.

AS you have brought me into a little sort of distress, you must assist me, I believe, to get out of it as well as I can. Yesterday I had the misfortune of receiving a letter from certain gentlemen (as their bookseller expresses it), who have taken the Magazine of Magazines into their hand: they tell me that an ingenious poem, called Reflections in a Country Church-yard, has been communicated to them, which they are printing forthwith; that they are informed that the excellent author of it is I by name, and that they beg not only his indulgence, but the honour of his correspondence, &c. As I am not at all disposed to be either so indulgent, or so correspondent,

as they desire, I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me; and therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time) from your copy, but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him, but on his best paper and character; he must correct the press himself, and print it without any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be,—Elegy, written in a Country Church-yard. If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better. If you behold the Magazine of Magazines in the light that I do, you will not refuse to give yourself this trouble on my account, which you have taken of your own accord before now. If Dodsley do not do this immediately, he as well let it alone.

LETTER LXVI.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Dec. 19, 1752.

HAVE you read Madame de Maintenon's Letters? They are undoubtedly genuine; they begin very early in her life, before she married Scarron, and continue after the king's death to within a little while of her own; they bear all the marks of a noble spirit (in her adversity particularly), of virtue and unaffected devotion; insomuch, that I am almost persuaded she was actually married to Lewis the XIVth, and never his mistress; and this not out of any policy or ambition, but conscience: for she was what we should call a bigot, yet with great good sense: in short, she was too good for a court. Misfortunes in the beginning of her life had formed her mind (naturally lively and impatient) to reflection and a habit of piety. She was always miserable while she had the care of Madame de Montespan's children; timid and very cautious of making use of that unlimited power she rose to afterwards, for fear of trespassing on the king's friendship for her; and after his death not at all afraid of meeting her own.

I do not know what to say to you with regard to Racine, it sounds to me as if any body should fall upon Shakespear, who indeed lies infinitely more open to criticism of all kinds; but I should not care to be the person that undertook it. If you do not like Athaliah or Britannicus, there is no more to be said. I have done.

Bishop Hall's satires, called Virgidemiæ, are lately republished. They are full of spirit and poetry; as much of the first as Dr. Donne, and far more of the latter: they were written at the university when he was about twenty-three years old, and in Queen Elizabeth's time.

You do not say whether you have read the Crito*. I only recommend the dramatic part of the Phædo to you, not the argumentative. The subject of the Erastæ is good; it treats of that peculiar character and turn of mind which belongs to a true philosopher, but it is shorter than one would wish. The Euthyphro I would not read at all.

LETTER LXVII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Walpole.

Stoke, Jan. 1752.

I AM at present at Stoke, to which place I came at half an hour's warning upon the news I received of my mother's illness, and did not expect to have found her alive; but when I arrived she was much better, and continues so. I shall therefore be very glad to make you a visit at Strawberry-Hill, whenever you give me notice of a convenient time. I am surprised at the print, which far surpasses my idea of London graving: the drawing itself was so finished, that I suppose it did not require all the art I had imagined to copy it tolerably. My aunts seeing me open your letter, took it to be a burying-ticket, and asked whether any body had left me a ring; and so they still conceive it to be, even with all their spectacles on. Heaven forbid they should suspect it to belong to any verses of mine, they would burn me for a poet. On my own part I am satisfied, if this design of yours succeed so well as you intend it; and yet I know it will be accompanied with something not at all agreeable to me. While I write this, I receive your

* Of Plato.

second

second letter.—Sure, you are not out of your wits! This I know, if you suffer my head to be printed, you will infallibly put me out of mine. I conjure you immediately to put a stop to any such design. Who is at the expence of engraving it, I know not; but if it be Dodsley, I will make up the loss to him. The thing, as it was, I know, will make me ridiculous enough; but to appear in proper person, at the head of my works, consisting of half a dozen ballads in thirty pages, would be worse than the pillory. I do assure you, if I had received such a book, with such a frontispiece, without any warning, I believe it would have given me a palsy: therefore I rejoice to have received this notice, and shall not be easy till you tell me all thoughts of it are laid aside. I am extremely in earnest, and cannot bear even the idea.

I had written to Dodsley if I had not received yours, to tell him how little I liked the title which he meant to prefix; but your letter has put all that out of my head. If you think it necessary to print these explanations for the use of people that have no eyes, I should be glad they were a little altered. I am, to my shame, in your debt for a long letter; but I cannot think of any thing else till you have set me at ease on this matter.

LETTER LXVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Durham, Dec. 26, 1753.

A LITTLE while before I received your melancholy letter, I had been informed by Mr. Charles Avison of one of the sad events you mention.* I know what it is to lose persons that one's eyes and heart have long been used to; and I never desire to part with the remembrance of that loss, nor would wish you should. It is something that you had a little time to acquaint yourself with the idea before-hand; and that your father suffered but little pain, the only thing that makes death terrible. After I have said this, I cannot help expressing my surprise at the disposition he has made of his affairs. I must (if you will suffer me to say so) call it great weakness; and yet perhaps your affliction for him is heightened by that very weakness; for I know it is possible to feel an additional sorrow for the faults of those we have loved, even where that fault has been greatly injurious to ourselves.—Let me desire you not to expose yourself to any further danger in the midst of that scene of sickness and death; but withdraw as soon as possible to some place at a little distance in the country; for I do not, in the least, like the situation you are in. I do not attempt to console you on the situation your fortune is left in; if it were far worse, the good opinion I have of you tells me, you will never the sooner do any thing mean or unworthy of yourself; and consequently I cannot pity you on this account, but I sincerely do on the new loss you have had of a good and friendly man, whose memory I honour. I have seen the scene you describe, and know how dreadful it is: I know too I am the better for it. We are all idle and thoughtless things, and have no sense, no use in the world any longer than that sad impression lasts; the deeper it is engraved the better.

* The death of Mr. Mason's father, and of Dr. Marmaduke Pricket, a young physician of his own age, with whom he was brought up from infancy, who died of the same infectious fever.

LETTER LXIX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Stoke, Sept. 18, 1754.

I AM glad you enter into the spirit of Strawberry-Castle; it has a purity and propriety of Gothicism in it (with very few exceptions) that I have not seen elsewhere. My Lord Radnor's vagaries I see did not keep you from doing justice to his situation, which far surpasses every thing near it; and I do not know a more laughing scene than that about Twickenham and Richmond. Dr. Akenside, I perceive, is no conjuror in architecture; especially when he talks of the ruins of Persepolis, which are no more Gothic than they are Chinese. The Egyptian style (see Dr. Pocock, not his discourses, but his prints) was apparently the mother of the Greek; and there is such a similitude between the Egyptian and those Persian ruins, as gave Diodorus room to affirm, that the old buildings of Persia were certainly performed by Egyptian artists,

artists. As to the other part of your friend's opinion, that the Gothic manner is the Saracen or Moorish, he has a great authority to support him, that of Sir Christopher Wren; and yet I cannot help thinking it undoubtedly wrong.—The palaces in Spain I never saw but in description, which gives us little or no idea of things; but the Doge's palace at Venice I have seen, which is in the Arabesque manner: and the houses of Barbary you may see in Dr. Shaw's book, not to mention abundance of other Eastern buildings in Turkey, Persia, &c. that we have views of; and they seem plainly to be corruptions of the Greek architecture, broke into little parts indeed, and covered with little ornaments, but in a taste very distinguishable from that which we call Gothic. There is one thing that runs through the Moorish buildings that an imitator would certainly have been first struck with, and would have tried to copy; and that is the cupolas which cover every thing, baths, apartments, and even kitchens; yet who ever saw a Gothic cupola? It is a thing plainly of Greek original. I do not see any thing but the slender spires that serve for steeples, which may perhaps be borrowed from the Saracen minarets on their mosques.

I take it ill you should say any thing against the Mole; it is a reflection I see cast at the Thames. Do you think that rivers, which have lived in London and its neighbourhood all their days, will run roaring and tumbling about like your tramontane torrents in the North? No, they only glide and whisper.

LETTER LXX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Cambridge, March 9, 1755.

I DO not pretend to humble any one's pride; I love my own too well to attempt it. As to mortifying their vanity it is too easy and too mean a task for me to delight in. You are very good in shewing so mu h sensibility on my account; but be assured my taste for praise is not like that of children for fruit; if there were nothing but medlars and black-berries in the world, I would be very well content to go without any at all. I dare say that Mason, though some years younger than I, was as little elevated with the approbation of Lord — and Lord —, as I am mortified by their silence.

With regard to publishing, I am not so much against the thing itself, as of publishing this Ode alone*. I have two or three ideas more in my head. What is to come of them? Must they come too out in the shape of little sixpenny flams, dropping one after another till Mr. Dodsley thinks fit to collect them with Mr. This's song, and Mr. Tother's epigram, into a pretty volume? I am sure Mason must be sensible of this, and therefore cannot mean what he says. Neither am I quite of your opinion with regard to strophe and antistrophe: setting aside the difficulty of execution, methinks it has little or no effect on the ear, which scarce perceives the regular return of metres at so great a distance from one another: to make it succeed, I am persuaded the stanzas must not consist of above nine lines each at the most. Pindar has several such odes.

LETTER LXXI.

From the same to the same.

Pembroke Hall, March 25, 1756.

THOUGH I had no reasonable excuse for myself before I received your last letter, yet since that time I have had a pretty good one, having been taken up in quarrelling with Peter-house†, and in removing myself from thence to Pembroke. This may be looked upon as a sort of æra in a life so barren of events as

* His Ode on the Progress of Poetry.

† The reason of Mr. Gray's changing his College, which is here only glanced at, was in few words this: Two or three young men of fortune, who lived in the same stair-case, had for some time intentionally disturbed him with their riots, and carried their ill behaviour so far as frequently to awaken him at midnight. After having borne with their insults longer than might reasonably have been expected even from a man of less warmth of temper, Mr. Gray complained to the governing part of the Society; and not thinking that his remonstrance was sufficiently attended to, quitted the College. The slight manner in which he mentions this affair, when writing to one of his most intimate friends, certainly does honour to the placability of his disposition.

mine;

mine; yet I shall treat it in Voltaire's manner, and only tell you that I left my lodgings because the rooms were noisy, and the people of the house uncivil. This is all I would choose to have said about it; but if you in private should be curious enough to enter into a particular detail of facts and minute circumstances, the bearer, who was witness to them, will probably satisfy you. All I shall say more is, that I am for the present extremely well lodged here, and as quiet as in the Grand Chartreuse; and that every body (even Dr. Long himself) are as civil as they could be to Mary of Valens* in person.

With regard to any advice I can give you about your being Physician to the Hospital, I frankly own it ought to give way to a much better judge, especially so disinterested a one as Dr. Heberden. I love refusals no more than you do. But as to your fears of effluvia, I maintain that one sick rich patient has more of pestilence and putrefaction about him than a whole ward of sick poor.

The similitude between the Italian republics and those of ancient Greece has often struck me, as it does you. I do not wonder that Sully's memoirs have highly entertained you; but cannot agree with you in thinking him or his master two of the best men in the world. The King was indeed one of the best natured men that ever lived; but it is owing only to chance that his intended marriage with Madame d'Estrées, or with the Marquise de Verneuil, did not involve him and the kingdom in the most inextricable confusion; and his design upon the Princess of Condé (in his old age) was worse still. As to the Minister, his base application to Concini, after the murder of Henry, has quite ruined him in my esteem, and destroyed all the merit of that honest surly pride for which I honoured him before; yet I own that, as Kings and Ministers go, they were both extraordinary men. Pray look at the end of Birch's State Papers of Sir J. Edmonds, for the character of the French Court at that time; it is written by Sir George Carew.

You should have received Mason's present† last Saturday. I desire you to tell me your critical opinion of the new Odes, and also whether you have found out two lines which he has inserted in his third to a friend, which are superlative‡. We do not expect the world, which is just going to be invaded, will bestow much attention to them; if you hear any thing, you will tell us.

LETTER LXII.

From the same to the same.

June 14, 1756.

THOUGH I allow abundance for your kindness and partiality to me, I am yet much pleased with the good opinion you seem to have of the Bard: I have not, however, done a word more than the little you have seen, having been in a very listless, unpleasant, and *inutile* state of mind for this long time, for which I shall beg you to prescribe me somewhat strengthening and agglutinant, lest it turn to a confirmed pthisis.

I recommend two little French books to you, one called Memoires de M. de la Porte; it has all the air of simplicity and truth, and contains some very few extraordinary facts relating to Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarine. The other is in two small volumes, "Memoires de Ma-" dame Staal." The facts are no great matter, but the manner and vivacity make them interesting. She was a sort of confidante to the late Dutchess of Maine, and imprisoned a long time on her account during the regency.

I ought before now to have thanked you for your kind offer, which I mean soon to accept, for a reason which, to be sure, can be none to you and Mrs. Wharton; and therefore I think it my duty to give you notice of it. I have told you already of my mental ailments; and it is a very possible thing also that I may be bodily ill again in town, which I would not choose to be in a dirty inconvenient lodging, where, perhaps, my nurse might stifle me with a pillow; and therefore it is no wonder if I prefer your house: but I tell you of this in time, that if either of you are frightened at the thoughts of a

* Foundress of the College.

† The four Odes which Mr. Mason had just published separately.

‡ While thro' the west, where sinks the crimson day,
Meek Twilight slowly sails, and waves her banners gray.

sick

sick body, you may make a handsome excuse and save yourselves this trouble. You are not, however, to imagine my illness is *in esse*; no, it is only *in posse*; otherwise I should be scrupulous of bringing it home to you. I think I shall be with you in about a fortnight.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Stoke, July 25, 1756.

I FEEL a contrition for my long silence; and yet perhaps it is the last thing you trouble your head about. Nevertheless, I will be as sorry as if you took it ill. I am sorry too to see you so punctilious as to stand upon answers, and never to come near me till I have regularly left my name at your door, like a mercer's wife, that imitates people who go a-visiting. I would forgive you this, if you could possibly suspect I were doing any thing that I liked better; for then your formality might look like being piqued at my negligence, which has somewhat in it like kindness: but you know I am at Stoke, hearing, seeing, doing absolutely nothing. Not such a nothing as you do at Tunbridge, chequered and diversified with a succession of fleeting colours; but heavy, lifeless, without form and void; sometimes almost as black as the moral of Voltaire's Lisbon*, which angers you so. I have had no more muscular inflations, and am only troubled with this depression of mind. You will not expect, therefore, I should give you any account of my *Verve*, which is at best (you know) of so delicate a constitution, and has such weak nerves as not to stir out of its chamber above three days in a year. But I shall inquire after yours, and why it is off again? It has certainly worse nerves than mine, if your Reviewers have frighted it. Sure I (not to mention a score of your other critics) am something a better judge than all the men-midwives and presbyterian parsons† that ever were born. Pray give me leave to ask you, do you find yourself tickled with the commendations of such people? (for you have your share of these too:) I dare say not; your vanity has certainly a better taste. And can then the censure of such critics move you? I own it is an impertinence in these gentry to talk of one at all, either in good or in bad; but this we must all swallow: I mean not only we that write, but all the *we's* that ever did any thing to be talked of.

While I am writing I receive yours, and rejoice to find that the genial influences of this fine season, which produce nothing in me, have hatched high and unimaginable fantasies in you‡. I see, methinks, as I sit on Snowdon, some glimpse of Mona and her haunted shades, and hope we shall be very good neighbours. Any Druidical anecdotes that I can meet with, I will be sure to send you when I return to Cambridge; but I cannot pretend to be learned without books, or to know the Druids from modern Bishops at this distance. I can only tell you not to go and take Mona for the Isle of Man: it is Anglesey, a tract of plain country, very fertile, but picturesque only from the view it has of Caernarvonshire, from which it is separated by the Menai, a narrow arm of the sea. Forgive me for supposing in you such a want of erudition.

I congratulate you on our glorious successes in the Mediterranean. Shall we go in time, and hire a house together in Switzerland? It is a fine poetical country to look at, and nobody there will understand a word we say or write.

LETTER LXXIV.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, May 1757.

YOU are so forgetful of me that I should not forgive it, but that I suppose Caractacus may be the better for it. Yet I hear nothing from him neither, in spite of his promises: there is no faith in man, no not in a Welchman; and yet Mr. Parry§ has been here, and scratched out such ravishing blind harmony, such tunes of a

* His Poem "sur la Destruction de Lisbon," published about that time.

† The Reviewers, at the time, were supposed to be of those professions.

‡ Mr. Mason had sent him his first idea of Caractacus, drawn out in a short argument.

§ A capital performer on the Welch harp, and who was either born blind, or had been so from his infancy.

thousand

thousand years old, with names enough to choak you, as have set all this learned body a-dancing, and inspired them with due reverence for my old Bard his countryman, whenever he shall appear. Mr. Parry, you must know, has put my Ode in motion again, and has brought it at last to a conclusion. It is to him, therefore, that you owe the treat which I send you inclosed; namely, the breast and merry-thought, and rump too, of the chicken which I have been chewing so long, that I would give the world for neck-beef or cow-heel.

You will observe, in the beginning of this thing, some alteration of a few words, partly for improvement, and partly to avoid repetitions of like words and rhymes; yet I have not got rid of them all; the six last lines of the fifth stanza are new; tell me whether they will do. I am well aware of many weakly things towards the conclusion, but I hope the end itself will do; give me your full and true opinion, and that not upon deliberation, but forthwith. Mr. Hurd himself allows that *Lion port* is not too bold for Queen Elizabeth.

I have got the old Scotch ballad on which Douglas was founded; it is divine, and as long as from hence to Aston. Have you never seen it? Aristotle's best rules are observed in it, in a manner that shews the author had never read Aristotle. It begins in the fifth act of the play: you may read it two-thirds through without guessing what it is about: and yet, when you come to the end, it is impossible not to understand the whole story. I send you the two first stanzas.

* * * *

LETTER LXXV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Hurd.*

Stoke, August 25, 1757.

I do not know why you should thank me for what you had a right and title to†; but attribute it to the excess of your politeness; and the more so, because almost no one else has made me the same compliment. As your acquaintance in the University (you say) do me the honour to *admire*, it would be ungenerous in me not to give them notice, that they are doing a very unfashionable thing; for all people of condition are agreed not to admire, nor even to understand. One very great man, writing to an acquaintance of his and mine, says that he had read them seven or eight times; and that now, when he next sees him, he shall not have above *thirty questions* to ask. Another (a peer) believes that the last stanza of the second Ode relates to King Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell. Even my friends tell me they do not *succeed*, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head. In short, I have heard of nobody but an actor and a doctor of divinity that profess their esteem for them. Oh yes, a lady of quality (a friend of Mason's), who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was any thing said about Shakespear or Milton, till it was explained to her; and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about.

From this mention of Mason's name you may think, perhaps, we are great correspondents. No such thing; I have not heard from him these two months. I will be sure to scold in my own name, as well as in yours. I rejoice to hear you are so ripe for the press, and so voluminous; not for my own sake only, whom you flatter with the hopes of seeing your labours both public and private, but for yours too; for to be employed is to be happy. This principle of mine (and I am convinced of its truth) has, as usual, no influence on my practice. I am alone, and *ennuyé* to the last degree, yet do nothing. Indeed I have one excuse: my health (which you have so kindly inquired after) is not extraordinary, ever since I came hither. It is no great malady, but several little ones, that seem brewing no good to me. It will be a particular pleasure to me to hear whether Content dwells in Leicestershire, and how she entertains herself there. Only do not be too happy, nor forget entirely the quiet ugliness of Cambridge.

* Afterwards Bishop of Worcester.
† A present of his two Pindaric Odes just then published.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Cambridge, Dec. 19, 1757.

A LIFE spent out of the world has its hours of despondence, its inconveniences, its sufferings, as numerous and as real, though not quite of the same sort, as a life spent in the midst of it. The power we have, when we will exert it over our own minds, joined to a little strength and consolation, nay, a little pride we catch from those that seem to love us, is our only support in either of these conditions. I am sensible I cannot return you more of this assistance than I have received from you; and can only tell you, that one who has far more reason than you, I hope, ever will have to look on life with something worse than indifference, is yet no enemy to it; but can look backward on many bitter moments, partly with satisfaction, and partly with patience; and forward too, on a scene not very promising, with some hope, and some expectations of a better day. The cause, however, which occasioned your reflection (though I can judge but very imperfectly of it), does not seem, at present, to be weighty enough to make you take any such resolution as you meditate. Use it in its season, as a relief from what is tiresome to you, but not as if it was in consequence of any thing you take ill; on the contrary, if such a thing had happened at the time of your transmigration, I would defer it merely to avoid that appearance.

As to myself, I cannot boast, at present, either of my spirits, my situation, my employments, or fertility. The days and the nights pass, and I am never the nearer to any thing, but that one to which we are all tending; yet I love people that leave some traces of their journey behind them, and have strength enough to advise you to do so while you can. I expect to see Caractacus completed, and therefore I send you the books you wanted. I do not know whether they will furnish you with any new matter: but they are well enough written, and easily read. I told you before, that (in a time of dearth) I would borrow from the Edda, without entering too minutely on particulars: but, if I did so, I would make each image so clear, that it might be fully understood by itself; for in this obscure mythology we must not hint at things, as we do with the Greek fables, that every body is supposed to know at school. However, on second thoughts, I think it would be still better to graft any wild picturesque fable, absolutely of one's own invention, on the Druid-stock; I mean on those half dozen of old fancies that are known to be a part of their system. This will give you more freedom and latitude, and will leave no hold for the critics to fasten on.

I send you back the elegy *, as you desired me to do. My advices are always at your service to take or to refuse, therefore you should not call them severe. You know I do not love, much less pique myself on criticism; and think even a bad verse as good a thing or better than the best observation that ever was made upon it. I like greatly the spirit and sentiment of it (much of which you perhaps owe to your present train of thinking); the disposition of the whole too is natural and elegiac; as to the expression, I would venture to say (did not you forbid me) that it is sometimes too easy. The last line I protest against (this, you will say, is worse than blotting out rhymes); the descriptive part is excellent.

Pray, when did I pretend to finish, or even insert passages into other people's works, as if it were equally easy to pick holes and to mend them? All I can say is, that your elegy must not end with the worst line in it. It is flat; it is prose; whereas that, above all ought to sparkle, or at least to shine. If the sentiment must stand, twirl it a little into an apothegm; stick a flower in it; gild it with a costly expression; let it strike the fancy, the ear, or the heart, and I am satisfied.

The other particular expressions which I object to, I mark on the manuscript. Now, I desire you would neither think me severe, nor at all regard what I say further than as it coincides with your own judgment; for the child deserves your partiality; it is a healthy well-made boy, with an ingenuous countenance, and promises to live long. I would only wash its face, dress it a little, make it walk

* Elegy in the Garden of a Friend.

upright

upright and strong, and keep it from learning *paw* words.

I hope you couched my refusal* to Lord John Cavendish in as respectful terms as possible, and with all due acknowledgments to the Duke. If you hear who it is to be given to, pray let me know; for I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather wish somebody may accept it that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had it; Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, though at last he turned out a drunken parson; Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest scribbler could have been from his verses.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

February 21, 1758.

WOULD you know what I am doing? I doubt you have been told already, and hold my employments cheap enough; but every one must judge of his own capability, and cut his amusements according to his disposition. The drift of my present studies is to know, wherever I am, what lies within reach that may be worth seeing, whether it be building, ruin, park, garden, prospect, picture, or monument; to whom it doth or has belonged, and what has been the characteristic and taste of different ages. You will say this is the object of all antiquaries; but pray what antiquary ever saw these objects in the same light, or desired to know them for a like reason? In short, say what you please, I am persuaded whenever my list is finished you will approve it, and think it of no small use. My spirits are very near the freezing point; and for some hours of the day this exercise, by its warmth and gentle motion, serves to raise them a few degrees higher.

I hope the misfortune that has befallen Mrs. Cibber's canary bird will not be the ruin of Agis: it is probable you will have curiosity enough to see it, as it is by the author of Douglas.

* Of being Poet Laureat on the death of Cibber, which place the late Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Chamberlain) desired his brother to offer to Mr. Gray; and his Lordship had commissioned Mr. Mason (then in town) to write to him concerning it.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the same to the same.

Cambridge, March 8, 1758.

IT is indeed for want of spirits, as you suspect, that my studies lie among the cathedrals, and the tombs, and the ruins. To think, though to little purpose, has been the chief amusement of my days; and when I would not, or cannot think, I dream. At present I feel myself able to write a catalogue, or to read the Peerage book, or Miller's Gardening Dictionary, and am thankful that there are such employments and such authors in the world. Some people, who hold me cheap for this, are doing perhaps what is not half so well worth while. As to posterity, I may ask (with somebody whom I have forgot), what has it ever done to oblige me?

To make a transition from myself to as poor a subject, the tragedy of Agis: I cry to think that it should be by the author of Douglas: why, it is all modern Greek; the story is an antique statue painted white and red, frized, and dressed in a negligée made by a Yorkshire mantua-maker. Then here is the Miscellany (Mr. Dodsley has sent me the whole set gilt and lettered; I thank him). Why, the two last volumes are worse than the four first; particularly Dr. Akenside is in a deplorable way. What signifies learning and the ancients (Mason will say triumphantly); why should people read Greek to lose their imagination, their ear, and their mother tongue? But then there is Mr. Shenstone, who trusts to nature and simple sentiment, why does he do no better? He goes hopping along his own gravel-walks, and never deviates from the beaten paths for fear of being lost.

I have read Dr. Swift, and am disappointed †. There is nothing of the negotiations that I have not seen better in M. de Torcy before. The manner is careless, and has little to distinguish it from common writers. I meet with nothing to please me but the spiteful cha-

† His History of the four last years of Queen Anne,

racters

racters of the opposite party and its leaders. I expected much more secret history.

LETTER LXXIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Stonehewer.

Cambridge, August 18, 1758.

I AM as sorry as you seem to be, that our acquaintance harped so much on the subject of materialism, when I saw him with you in town, because it was plain to which side of the long-debated question he inclined. That we are indeed mechanical and dependent beings, I need no other proof than my own feelings; and from the same feelings I learn, with equal conviction, that we are not merely such; that there is a power within that struggles against the force and bias of that mechanism, commands its motion, and, by frequent practice, reduces it to that ready obedience which we call habit; and all this in conformity to a preconceived opinion (no matter whether right or wrong), to that least material of all agents, a thought. I have known many in his case who, while they thought they were conquering an old prejudice, did not perceive they were under the influence of one far more dangerous; one that furnishes us with a ready apology for all our worst actions, and opens to us a full license for doing whatever we please; and yet these very people were not at all the more indulgent to other men (as they naturally should have been): their indignation to such as offended them, their desire of revenge on any body that hurt them, was nothing mitigated: in short, the truth is, they wished to be persuaded of that opinion for the sake of its convenience, but were not so in their heart; and they would have been glad, (as they ought in common prudence) that nobody else should think the same, for fear of the mischief that might ensue to themselves. His French author I never saw, but have read fifty in the same strain, and shall read no more. I can be wretched enough without them. They put me in mind of the Greek sophist that got immortal honour by discoursing so feelingly on the miseries of our condition, that fifty of his audience went home and hanged themselves; yet he lived himself (I suppose) many years after in very good plight.

You say you cannot conceive how Lord Shaftesbury came to be a philosopher in vogue; I will tell you: 1st, he was a lord; 2dly, he was as vain as any of his readers; 3dly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; 4thly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; 5thly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; 6thly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seemed always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks but with commoners: vanity is no longer interested in the matter, for the new road is become an old one. The mode of free-thinking is like that of ruffs and farthingales, and has given place to the mode of not thinking at all; once it was reckoned graceful, half to discover and half conceal the mind, but now we have been long accustomed to see it quite naked: primness and affectation of style, like the good breeding of Queen Anne's court, has turned to hoydening and rude familiarity.

LETTER LXXX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Sunday, April 9, 1758.

I AM equally sensible of your affliction*, and of your kindness, that made you think of me at such a moment; would to God I could lessen the one, or requite the other with that consolation which I have often received from you when I most wanted it! but your grief is too just, and the cause of it too fresh, to admit of any such endeavour: what, indeed, is all human consolation? Can it efface every little amiable word or action of an object we loved, from our memory? Can it convince us, that all the hopes we had entertained, the plans of future satisfaction we had formed, were ill-grounded and vain, only because we have lost them? The only comfort (I am afraid) that belongs to our condition, is to reflect (when

* Occasioned by the death of his eldest (and at that time his only) son.

time

time has given us leisure for reflection) that others have suffered worse; or that we ourselves might have suffered the same misfortune at times and in circumstances that would probably have aggravated our sorrow. You might have seen this poor child arrived at an age to fulfil all your hopes, to attach you more strongly to him by long habit, by esteem, as well as natural affection, and that towards the decline of your life, when we most stand in need of support, and when he might chance to have been your only support; and then by some unforeseen and deplorable accident, or some painful lingering distemper, you might have lost him. Such has been the fate of many an unhappy father: I know there is a sort of tenderness which infancy and innocence alone produce; but I think you must own the other to be a stronger and a more overwhelming sorrow. Let me then beseech you to try, by every method of avocation and amusement, whether you cannot, by degrees, get the better of that dejection of spirits, which inclines you to see every thing in the worst light possible, and throws a sort of voluntary gloom, not only over your present, but future days; as if even your situation now were not preferable to that of thousands round you; and as if your prospect hereafter might not open as much of happiness to you as to any person you know: the condition of our life perpetually instructs us to be rather slow to hope, as well as to despair; and (I know you will forgive me, if I tell you) you are often a little too hasty in both, perhaps from constitution. It is sure we have great power over our own minds, when we choose to exert it; and though it be difficult to resist the mechanic impulse and bias of our own temper, it is yet possible, and still more so to delay those resolutions it inclines us to take, which we almost always have cause to repent.

You tell me nothing of Mrs. Wharton's or your own state of health: I will not talk to you more upon this subject till I hear you are both well; for that is the grand point, and without it we may as well not think at all. You flatter me in thinking that any thing I can do*, could at all alleviate the just concern your loss has given you; but I cannot flatter myself so far, and know how little qualified I am at present to give any satisfaction to myself on this head, and in this way, much less to you. I by no means pretend to inspiration; but yet I affirm, that the faculty in question, is by no means voluntary; it is the result (I suppose) of a certain disposition of mind, which does not depend on one's self, and which I have not felt this long time. You that are a witness how seldom this spirit has moved me in my life, may easily give credit to what I say.

* His friend had requested him to write an Epitaph on the child.

LETTER LXXXI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Palgrave†.

Stoke, Sept. 6, 1758.

I do not know how to make you amends, having neither rock, ruin, nor precipice, near me to send you; they do not grow in the south: but only say the word, if you would have a compact neat box of red brick with sash windows, or a grotto made of flints and shell-work, or a walnut-tree with three mole-hills under it, stuck with honey-suckles round a bason of gold-fishes, and you shall be satisfied; they shall come by the Edinburgh coach.

In the mean time I congratulate you on your new acquaintance with the savage, the rude, and the tremendous. Pray, tell me, is it any thing like what you had read in your book, or seen in two-shilling prints? Do not you think a man may be the wiser (I had almost said the better) for going a hundred or two of miles; and that the mind has more room in it than most people seem to think, if you will but furnish the apartments? I almost envy your last month, being in a very insipid situation myself: and desire you would not fail to send me some furniture for my Gothic apartment, which is very cold at present. It will be the easier task, as you have nothing to do but transcribe your little red books, if they are not rubbed out; for I conclude you have not trusted every thing to me-

† Rector of Palgrave and Thrandeston in Suffolk. He was making a tour in Scotland when this letter was written to him.

mory, which is ten times worse than a lead-pencil: half a word fixed upon or near a spot, is worth a cart-load of recollection. When we trust to the picture that objects draw of themselves on our mind, we deceive ourselves; without accurate and particular observation, it is but ill-drawn at first, the outlines are soon blurred, the colours every day grow fainter; and at last, when we would produce it to any body, we are forced to supply its defects with a few strokes of our own imagination. God forgive me, I suppose I have done so myself before now, and misled many a good body that put their trust in me. Pray, tell me (but with permission, and without any breach of hospitality), is it so much warmer on the other side of the Swale (as some people of honour say) than it is here? Has the singing of birds, the bleating of sheep, the lowing of herds, deafened you at Rainton? Did the vast old oaks and thick groves in Northumberland keep off the sun too much from you? I am too civil to extend my inquiries beyond Berwick. Every thing, doubtless, must improve upon you as you advanced northward. You must tell me, though, about Melross, Rosslin Chapel, and Arbroath. In short, your portfeuille must be so full, that I only desire a loose chapter or two, and will wait for the rest till it comes out.

LETTER LXXXII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Palgrave.

London, July 24, 1759.

I AM now settled in my new territories commanding Bedford gardens, and all the fields as far as Highgate and Hampstead, with such a concourse of moving pictures as would astonish you; so *rus-in-urbe-ish*, that I believe I shall stay here, except little excursions and vagaries, for a year to come. What though I am separated from the fashionable world by Broad St. Giles's, and many a dirty court and alley, yet here is air, and sunshine, and quiet, however, to comfort you: I shall confess that I am basking with heat all the summer, and I suppose shall be blown down all the winter, besides being robbed every night; I trust, however, that the Musæum, with all its manuscripts and rarities by the cart-load, will make ample amends for all the aforesaid inconveniencies.

I this day past through the jaws of a great leviathan into the den of Dr. Templeman, superintendant of the reading-room, who congratulated himself on the sight of so much good company. We were, first, a man that writes for Lord Royston; 2dly, a man that writes for Dr. Burton, of York; 3dly, a man that writes for the Emperor of Germany, or Dr. Pocock, for he speaks the worst English I ever heard; 4thly, Dr. Stukely, who writes for himself, the very worst person he could write for; and lastly, I, who only read to know if there be any thing worth writing, and that not without some difficulty. I find that they printed 1000 copies of the Harleian Catalogue, and have sold only fourscore; that they have 900l. a-year income, and spend 1300l. and are building apartments for the under-keepers; so I expect in winter to see the collection advertised and set to auction.

Have you read Lord Clarendon's Continuation of his History? Do you remember Mr. **'s account of it before it came out? How well he recollected all the faults, and how utterly he forgot all the beauties: surely the grossest taste is better than such a sort of delicacy.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

London, June 22, 1760.

I AM not sorry to hear you are exceeding busy, except as it has deprived me of the pleasure I should have in hearing often from you; and as it has been occasioned by a little vexation and disappointment. To find one's self business, I am persuaded, is the great art of life; I am never so angry, as when I hear my acquaintance wishing they had been bred to some poking profession, or employed in some office of drudgery, as if it were pleasanter to be at the command of other people than at one's own; and as if they could not go unless they were wound up: yet I know and feel what they mean by this complaint; it proves that some spirit, something of genius (more than common) is required to teach a man how to employ himself; I say a man; for women, commonly

monly speaking, never feel this distemper, they have always something to do; time hangs not on their hands (unless they be fine ladies); a variety of small inventions and occupations fill up the void, and their eyes are never open in vain.

As to myself, I have again found rest for the sole of my gouty foot in your old dining-room*, and hope that you will find at least an equal satisfaction at Old-Park; if your bog prove as comfortable as my oven, I shall see no occasion to pity you, and only wish you may brew no worse than I bake.

You totally mistake my talents, when you impute to me any magical skill in planting roses: I know I am no conjurer in these things; when they are done I can find fault, and that is all. Now this is the very reverse of genius, and I feel my own littleness. Reasonable people know themselves better than is commonly imagined; and therefore (though I never saw any instance of it) I believe Mason when he tells me that he understands these things. The prophetic eye of taste (as Mr. Pitt called it) sees all the beauties, that a place is susceptible of, long before they are born; and when it plants a seedling, already sits under the shadow of it, and enjoys the effect it will have from every point of view that lies in prospect. You must therefore invoke Caractacus, and he will send his spirits from the top of Snowdon to Crossfall or Warden-law.

I am much obliged to you for your antique news. Froissard is a favourite book of mine (though I have not attentively read him, but only dipped here and there); and it is strange to me that people who would give thousands for a dozen portraits (originals of that time) to furnish a gallery, should never cast an eye on so many moving pictures of the life, actions, manners, and thoughts of their ancestors, done on the spot, and in strong, though simple colours. In the succeeding century Froissard, I find, was read with great satisfaction by every body that could read; and on the same footing with King Arthur, Sir Tristram, and Archbishop Turpin; not because they thought him a fabulous writer, but because they took them all for true and authentic historians; to so little purpose was it in that age for a man to be at the pains of writing truth. Pray, are you come to the four Irish Kings that went to school to King Richard the Second's Master of the Ceremonies, and the man who informed Froissard of all he had seen in St. Patrick's purgatory?

The town are reading the King of Prussia's poetry *(La Philosophe sans Souci)*, and I have done like the town; they do not seem so sick of it as I am: it is all the scum of Voltaire and Lord Bolingbroke, the crambe-recocta of our worst freethinkers, tossed up in German-French rhyme. Tristram Shandy is still a greater object of admiration, the man as well as the book: one is invited to dinner, where he dines a fortnight before: as to the volumes yet published, there is much good fun in them, and humour sometimes hit and sometimes missed. Have you read his sermons, with his own comic figure, from a painting by Reynolds, at the head of them? They are in the style I think most proper for the pulpit, and shew a strong imagination and a sensible heart; but you see him often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of the audience.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Stonehewer.

London, June 29, 1760.

THOUGH you have had but a melancholy employment, it is worthy of envy, and (I hope) will have all the success it deserves†. It was the best and most natural method of cure, and such as could not have been administered by any but your gentle hand. I thank you for communicating to me what must give you so much satisfaction.

I too was reading M. D'Alembert, and (like you) am totally disappointed in his Elements. I could only taste a little of the first course: it was dry as a stick, hard as a stone, and cold as a cucumber. But then the letter to Rousseau is like

* The house in Southampton-Row, where Mr. Gray lodged, had been tenanted by Dr. Wharton; who, on account of his ill health, left London the year before, and was removed to his paternal estate at Old Park, near Durham.

† Mr. Stonehewer was now at Houghton-le-Spring, in the Bishoprick of Durham, attending on his sick father, rector of that parish.

himself: and the discourses on elocution, and on the liberty of music, are divine. He has added to his translations from Tacitus; and (what is remarkable) though that author's manner more nearly resembles the best French writers of the present age, than any thing, he totally fails in the attempt. Is it his fault, or that of the language?

I have received another Scotch packet with a third specimen, inferior in kind (because it is merely description), but yet full of nature and noble wild imagination. Five bards pass the night at the castle of a chief (himself a principal bard); each goes in his turn to observe the face of things, and returns with an extempore picture of the changes he has seen (it is an October night, the harvest-month of the Highlands). This is the whole plan; yet there is a contrivance, and a preparation of ideas, that you would not expect. The oddest thing is, that every one of them sees ghosts (more or less). The idea, that struck and surprised me most, is the following. One of them (describing a storm of wind and rain) says

Ghosts ride on the tempest to-night:
Sweet is their voice between the gusts of wind;
Their songs are of other worlds!

Did you never observe (while rocking winds are piping loud) that pause, as the gust is recollecting itself, and rising upon the ear in a shrill and plaintive note, like the swell of an Æolian harp? I do assure you there is nothing in the world so like the voice of a spirit. Thomson had an ear sometimes: he was not deaf to this; and has described it gloriously, but given it another different turn, and of more horror. I cannot repeat the lines: it is in his Winter. There is another very fine picture in one of them. It describes the breaking of the clouds after the storm, before it is settled into a calm, and when the moon is seen by short intervals.

The waves are tumbling on the lake,
And lash the rocky sides.
The boat is brimful in the cove,
The oars on the rocking tide.
Sad sits a maid beneath a cliff,
And eyes the rolling stream:
Her lover promised to come,
She saw his boat (when it was evening) on the lake;
Are these his groans in the gale?
Is this his broken boat on the shore?

LETTER LXXXV.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Clarke.*

Pembroke Hall. Aug. 12, 1760.

NOT knowing whether you are yet returned from your sea-water, I write at random to you. For me, I am come to my resting-place, and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning to night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) doing something, that is, racketting about from morning to night, are occupations, I find, that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where one might sit still, and be alone with pleasure; for the place was a hill† like Cliefden, opening to a very extensive and diversified landscape, with the Thames, which is navigable, running at its foot.

I would wish to continue here (in a very different scene, it must be confessed) till Michaelmas; but I fear I must come to town much sooner. Cambridge is a delight of a place, now there is nobody in it. I do believe you would like it, if you knew what it was without inhabitants. It is they, I assure you, that get it an ill name and spoil all. Our friend Dr. — (one of its nuisances) is not expected here again in a hurry. He is gone to his grave with five fine mackarel (large and full of roe) in his belly. He ate them all at one dinner; but his fare was a turbot on Trinity Sunday, of which he left little for the company besides bones. He had not been hearty all the week! but after this sixth fish he never held up his head more, and a violent looseness carried him off. They say he made a very good end.

Have you seen the Erse fragments since they were printed? I am more puzzled than ever about their antiquity, though I still incline (against every body's opinion) to believe them old. Those you have already seen are the best; though there are some others that are excellent too.

* Physician at Epsom. With this gentleman Mr. Gray commenced an early acquaintance at College.

† Near Henley.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

Cambridge, Aug. 20, 1760.

I HAVE sent Musæus back as you desired me, scratched here and there; and with it also a bloody satire, written against no less persons than you and I by name. I concluded at first it was Mr.* *, because he is your friend and my humble servant; but then I thought he knew the world too well to call us the favourite minions of taste and fashion, especially as to odes. For to them his ridicule is confined; so it is not he, but Mr. Colman, nephew to Lady Bath, author of the Connoisseur, a member of one of the inns of court, and a particular acquaintance of Mr. Garrick. What have you done to him? for I never heard his name before; he makes very tolerable fun with me where I understand him (which is not every where); but seems more angry with you. Lest people should not understand the humour of the thing (which indeed to do they must have our lyricisms at their finger ends), letters come out in Lloyd's Evening-Post to tell them who and what it was that he meant, and says it is like to produce a great combustion in the literary world. So if you have any mind to *combustle* about it, well and good; for me, I am neither so literary nor so combustible. The Monthly Review, I see, just now has much stuff about us on this occasion. It says one of us at least has always borne his faculties meekly. I leave you to guess which of us that is; I think I know. You simpleton you! you must be meek, must you? and see what you get by it.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

London, 1761.

I REJOICE to find that you not only grow reconciled to your northern scene, but discover beauties round you that once were deformities: I am persuaded the whole matter is to have always something going forward. Happy they that can create a rose-tree, or erect a honey-suckle; that can watch the brood of a hen, or see a fleet of their own ducklings launch into the water: it is with a sentiment of envy I speak it, who never shall have even a thatched roof of my own, nor gather a strawberry but in Covent-Garden. I will not, however, believe in the vocality of Old-Park till next summer, when perhaps I may trust to my own ears.

The Nouvelle Heloise cruelly disappointed me, but it has its partisans, amongst which are Mason and Mr. Hurd; for me, I admire nothing but Fingal (I conclude you have seen it, if not Stonehewer can lend it you); yet I remain still in doubt about the authenticity of these poems, though inclining rather to believe them genuine in spite of the world; whether they are the inventions of antiquity, or of a modern Scotchman, either case is to me alike unaccountable; *je m'y perd*.

I send you a Swedish and English calendar; the first column is by Berger, a disciple of Linnæus; the second by Mr. Stillingfleet; the third (very imperfect indeed) by me. You are to observe, as you tend your plantations and take your walks, how the spring advances in the north, and whether Old-Park most resembles Upsal or Stratton. The latter has on one side a barren black heath, on the other a light sandy loam; all the country about is a dead flat: you see it is necessary you should know the situation (I do not mean any reflection upon any body's place); and this is the description Mr. Stillingfleet gives of his friend Mr. Marsham's seat, to which he retires in the summer and botanizes. I have lately made an acquaintance with this philosopher, who lives in a garret here in the winter, that he may support some near relations who depend upon him; he is always employed, consequently (according to my old maxim) always happy, always cheerful, and seems to me a very worthy honest man: his present scheme is to send some persons properly qualified to reside a year or two in Attica, to make themselves acquainted with the climate, productions, and natural history of the country, that we may understand Aristotle, Theophrastus, &c. who have been Heathen Greek to us for so many ages; and this he has got proposed to Lord Bute, no unlikely person to put it into execution, as he is himself a botanist.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

August 1761.

BE assured your York Canon never will die; so the better the thing is in value, the worse for you*. The true way to immortality is to get you nominated one's successor: age and diseases vanish at your name; fevers turn to radical heat, and fistulas to issues: it is a judgment that waits on your insatiable avarice. You could not let the poor old man die at his ease, when he was about it; and all his family (I suppose) are cursing you for it.

I wrote to Lord —— on his recovery; and he answers me very cheerfully, as if his illness had been but slight, and the pleurisy were no more than a hole in one's stocking. He got it (he says) not by scampering, racketing, and riding post, as I had supposed; but by going with ladies to Vauxhall. He is the picture (and pray so tell him, if you see him) of an old alderman that I knew, who, after living forty years on the fat of the land (not milk and honey, but arrack, punch and venison), and losing his great toe with a mortification, said to the last, that he owed it to two grapes, which he ate one day after dinner. He felt them lie cold at his stomach, the minute they were down.

Mr. Montagu (as I guess, at your instigation) has earnestly desired me to write some lines to be put on a monument, which he means to erect at Bellisle. It is a task I do not love, knowing Sir William Williams so slightly as I did: but he is so friendly a person, and his affliction seemed to me so real, that I could not refuse him. I have sent him the following verses, which I neither like myself, nor will he, I doubt; however, I have shewed him that I wished to oblige him. Tell me your real opinion.

* This was written at a time, when, by the favour of Dr. Fountayne, Dean of York, Mr. Mason expected to be made a residentiary in his cathedral.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

Cambridge, Dec. 4, 1762.

I FEEL very ungrateful every day that I continue silent; and yet now that I take my pen in hand, I have only time to tell you, that of all the places which I saw in my return from you, Hardwicke pleased me the most†. One would think that Mary Queen of Scots was but just walked down into the park with her guard for half an hour: her gallery, her room of audience, her anti-chamber, with the very canopies, chair of state, foot-stool, *lit de repos*, oratory, carpets, and hangings, just as she left them; a little tattered indeed, but the more venerable; and all preserved with religious care, and papered up in winter.

When I arrived in London I found Professor Turner‡ had been dead above a fortnight; and being cockered and spirited up by some friends (though it was rather the latest) I got my name suggested to Lord Bute. You may easily imagine who undertook it, and indeed he did it with zeal§. I received my answer very soon, which was what you may easily imagine, but joined with great professions of his desire to serve me on future occasions, and many more fine words that I pass over, not out of modesty, but for another reason: so you see I have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead. This nothing is a profound secret, and no one here suspects it even now. To-day I hear Mr. E. Delaval‖ has got it, but we are not yet certain; next to myself I wished for him.

You see we have made a peace. I shall be silent about it, because if I say any thing anti-ministerial, you will tell me you know the reason; and if I approve it, you will think I have my expectations still. All I know is, that the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwicke both say it is an excellent peace, and only Mr. Pitt calls it inglorious and insidious.

† A seat of the Duke of Devonshire, in Derbyshire.

‡ Professor of Modern Languages in the University of Cambridge.

§ This person was the late Sir Henry Erskine. The place in question was given to the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

‖ Fellow of Pembroke-hall, and of the Royal Society.

LETTER XC.

From the same to the same.

Pembroke-Hall, Aug. 26, 1766.

WHATEVER my pen may do, I am sure my thoughts expatiate no where oftener, or with more pleasure, than to Old Park. I hope you have made my peace with the angry little lady. It is certain, whether her name were in my letter or not, she was as present to my memory as the rest of the whole family; and I desire you would present her with two kisses in my name, and one a-piece to all the others; for I shall take the liberty to kiss them all (great and small), as you are to be my proxy.

In spite of the rain, which I think continued, with very short intervals, till the beginning of this month, and quite effaced the summer from the year, I made a shift to pass May and June not disagreeably in Kent. I was surprised at the beauty of the road to Canterbury, which (I know not why) had not struck me before. The whole country is a rich and well-cultivated garden; orchards, cherry-grounds, hop-gardens, intermixed with corn and frequent villages; gentle risings covered with wood, and every where the Thames and Medway breaking in upon the landscape with all their navigation. It was indeed owing to the bad weather that the whole scene was dressed in that tender emerald green, which one usually sees only for a fortnight in the opening of the spring; and this continued till I left the country. My residence was eight miles east of Canterbury, in a little quiet valley on the skirts of Barham-Down*. In these parts the whole soil is chalk, and whenever it holds up, in half an hour it is dry enough to walk out. I took the opportunity of three or four days fine weather to go into the Isle of Thanet; saw Margate (which is Bartholomew-fair by the sea-side), Ramsgate, and other places there; and so came by Sandwich, Deal, Dover, Folkstone, and Hithe, back again. The coast is not like Hartlepool; there are no rocks, but only chalky cliffs of no great height till you come to Dover; there indeed they are noble and picturesque, and the opposite coasts of France begin to bound your view, which was left before to range unlimited by any thing but the horizon; yet it is by no means a shipless sea, but every where peopled with white sails, and vessels of all sizes in motion: and take notice (except in the Isle, which is all corn-fields, and has very little inclosure) there are in all places hedge-rows, and tall trees even within a few yards of the beach. Particularly, Hithe stands on an eminence covered with wood. I shall confess we had fires at night (ay, and at day too) several times in June; but do not go and take advantage in the north at this, for it was the most untoward year that ever I remember.

My compliments to Mrs. Wharton and all your family: I will not name them, lest I should affront any body.

* At Denton, where his friend the Rev. William Robinson, brother to Matthew Robinson, Esq. late member for Canterbury, then resided.

LETTER XCI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Mason.

March 28, 1767.

I BREAK in upon you at a moment, when we least of all are permitted to disturb our friends, only to say, that you are daily and hourly present to my thoughts. If the worst be not yet past, you will neglect and pardon me: but if the last struggle be over; if the poor object of your long anxieties be no longer sensible to your kindness, or to her own sufferings, allow me (at least in idea, for what could I do, were I present, more than this?) to sit by you in silence, and pity from my heart not her, who is at rest, but you, who lose her. May He, who made us, the Master of our pleasures and of our pains, preserve and support you! Adieu.

I have long understood how little you had to hope.

LETTER XCII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Old Park, near Darlington, Durham, August 12, 1767.

I RECEIVED from Mr. Williamson, that very obliging mark you were pleased to give me of your remembrance: had I not entertained some slight hopes of revisiting Scotland this summer, and conse-

quently of seeing you at Aberdeen. I had sooner acknowledged, by letter, the favour you have done me. Those hopes are now at an end; but I do not therefore despair of seeing again a country that has given me so much pleasure; nor of telling you, in person, how much I esteem you and (as you chuse to call them) your amusements: the specimen of them, which you were so good as to send me, I think excellent; the sentiments are such as a melancholy imagination naturally suggests in solitude and silence, and that (though light and business may suspend or banish them at times) return with but so much the greater force upon a feeling heart: the diction is elegant and unconstrained: not loaded with epithets and figures, nor flagging into prose; the versification is easy and harmonious. My only objection is——

You see, Sir, I take the liberty you indulged me in, when I first saw you; and therefore I make no excuses for it, but desire you would take your revenge on me in kind.

I have read over (but too hastily) Mr. Ferguson's book. There are uncommon strains of eloquence in it: and I was surprised to find not one single idiom of his country (I think) in the whole work. He has not the fault you mention: his application to the heart is frequent, and often successful. His love of Montesquieu and Tacitus has led him into a manner of writing too short-winded and sententious; which those great men, had they lived in better times, and under a better government, would have avoided.

I know no pretence that I have to the honour Lord Gray is pleased to do me*: but if his Lordship chooses to own me, it certainly is not my business to deny it. I say not this merely on account of his quality, but because he is a very worthy and accomplished person. I am truly sorry for the great loss he has had since I left Scotland. If you should chance to see him, I will beg you to present my respectful humble service to his Lordship.

I gave Mr. Williamson all the information I was able in the short time he staid with me. He seemed to answer well the character you gave me of him: but what I chiefly envied in him, was his ability of walking all the way from Aberdeen to Cambridge, and back again; which if I possessed, you would soon see your obliged, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

Mr. Gray to the Duke of Grafton.

My Lord, Cambridge, July 1768.

YOUR Grace has dealt nobly with me; and the same delicacy of mind that induced you to confer this favour on me, unsolicited and unexpected, may perhaps make you averse to receive my sincerest thanks and grateful acknowledgments. Yet your Grace must excuse me, they will have their way: they are indeed but words; yet I know and feel they come from my heart, and therefore are not wholly unworthy of your Grace's acceptance. I even flatter myself (such is my pride) that you have some little satisfaction in your own work. If I did not deceive myself in this, it would complete the happiness of, my Lord, your Grace's most obliged and devoted servant.

LETTER XCIV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls†.

Jermyn-Street, Aug. 3, 1768.

THAT Mr. Brockett has broken his neck, by a fall from his horse, you will have seen in the newspapers: and also, that I, your humble servant, have kissed the King's hand for his succession: they are both true, but the manner how you know not; only I can assure you that I had no hand at all in his fall, and almost as little in the second event. He died on the Sunday; on Wednesday following, his Grace the Duke of Grafton wrote me a very polite letter to say, that his Majesty had commanded him to offer me the vacant professorship, not only as a reward of, &c. but as a credit to, &c. with much more, too high for me to transcribe: so on Thursday the King signed the warrant, and next day, at his levee, I kissed his hand; he made me several gracious speeches, which I shall not re-

* Lord Gray had said that Mr. Gray was related to his family.

† Rector of Lounde and Bradwell, in Suffolk. His acquaintance with Mr. Gray commenced a few years before the date of this, when he was a student of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

peat,

peat, because every body, that goes to court, does so; besides, the day was so hot, and the ceremony so embarrassing to me, that I hardly know what he said.

Adieu! I am to perish here with heat this fortnight yet, and then to Cambridge; to be sure my dignity is a little the worse for wear, but mended and washed, it will do for me.

LETTER XCV.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Pembroke-hall, Oct. 31, 1768.

It is some time since I received from Mr. Foulis two copies of my poems, one by the hands of Mr. T. Pitt, the other by Mr. Merrill, a bookseller of this town; it is indeed a most beautiful edition, and must certainly do credit both to him and to me: but I fear it will be of no other advantage to him, as Dodsley has contrived to glut the town already with two editions beforehand, one of 1500, and the other 750, both indeed far inferior to that of Glasgow, but sold at half the price. I must repeat my thanks, Sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself on my account; and through you I must desire leave to convey my acknowledgments to Mr. Foulis, for the pains and expence he has been at in this publication.

We live at so great a distance, that, perhaps, you may not yet have learned, what, I flatter myself, you will not be displeased to hear: the middle of last summer his Majesty was pleased to appoint me Regius Professor of Modern History in this University: it is the best thing the Crown has to bestow (on a layman) here; the salary is 400l. per ann.; but what enhances the value of it to me is, that it was bestowed without being asked. The person who held it before me, died on the Sunday; and on Wednesday following the Duke of Grafton wrote me a letter to say, that the King offered me this office, with many additional expressions of kindness on his Grace's part, to whom I am but little known, and whom I have not seen either before or since he did me this favour. Instances of a benefit so nobly conferred, I believe, are rare; and therefore I tell you of it as a thing that does honour, not only to me, but to the Minister.

As I lived here before from choice, I shall now continue to do so from obligation: if business or curiosity should call you southwards, you will find few friends that will see you with more cordial satisfaction than, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XCVI.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

I was absent from College, and did not receive your melancholy letter till my return hither yesterday; so you must not attribute this delay to me but to accident: to sympathize with you in such a loss* is an easy task for me, but to comfort you not so easy: can I wish to see you unaffected with the sad scene now before your eyes, or with the loss of a person that, through a great part of your life, has proved himself so kind a friend to you? He who best knows our nature (for he made us what we are), by such afflictions recalls us from our wandering thoughts and idle merriment; from the insolence of youth and prosperity, to serious reflection, to our duty, and to himself; nor need we hasten to get rid of these impressions; time (by appointment of the same Power) will cure the smart, and in some hearts soon blot out all the traces of sorrow: but such as preserve them longest (for it is partly left in our own power) do perhaps best acquiesce in the will of the chastiser.

For the consequences of this sudden loss, I see them well, and I think, in a like situation, could fortify my mind, so as to support them with cheerfulness and good hopes, though not naturally inclined to see things in their best aspect. When you have time to turn yourself round, you must think seriously of your profession; you know I would have wished to see you wear the livery of it long ago: but I will not dwell on this subject at present. To be obliged to those we love and esteem is a pleasure; but to serve and oblige them is still greater; and this, with independence (no vulgar blessing), are what a profession at your age may reasonably promise: without it they are hardly attainable. Remember I speak from experience.

* The death of his uncle Governor Floyer.

In the mean time, while your present situation lasts, which I hope will not be long, continue your kindness and confidence in me, by trusting me with the whole of it; and surely you hazard nothing by so doing: that situation does not appear so new to me as it does to you. You well know the tenor of my conversation (urged at times perhaps a little farther than you liked) has been intended to prepare you for this event, and to familiarize your mind with this spectre, which you call by its worse name: but remember that "*Honesta res est læto paupertas*." I see it with respect, and so will every one, whose poverty is not seated in their mind. There is but one real evil in it (take my word, who know it well), and that is, that you have less the power of assisting others, who have not the same resources to support them. You have youth: you have many kind well-intentioned people belonging to you; many acquaintances of your own, or families that will wish to serve you. Consider how many have had the same, or greater cause for dejection, with none of these resources before their eyes. Adieu! I sincerely wish your happiness.

P. S. I have just heard that a friend of mine is struck with a paralytic disorder, in which state it is likely he may live incapable of assisting himself, in the hands of servants or relations that only gape after his spoils, perhaps for years to come: think how many things may befal a man far worse than poverty or death.

LETTER XCVII.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

Pembroke College, June 24, 1769.

And so you have a garden of your own, and you plant and transplant, and are dirty and amused? Are you not ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such thing, you monster, nor ever shall be either dirty or amused as long as I live. My gardens are in the windows, like those of a lodger up three pair of stairs in Petticoat-lane, or Camomile-street, and they go to bed regularly under the same roof that I do. Dear, how charming it must be to walk out in one's own *garding*, and sit on a bench in the open air, with a fountain and leaden statue, and a rolling-stone, and an arbour: have a care of sore throats though, and the *agoe*.

However, be it known to you, though I have no garden, I have sold my estate*, and got a thousand guineas, and fourscore pounds a year for my old aunt, and a twenty pound prize in the lottery, and Lord knows what arrears in the Treasury, and am a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him, and in a few days shall have new window-curtains: are you avized of that? Ay, and a new mattrass to lie upon.

My Ode has been rehearsed again and again†, and the scholars have got scraps by heart: I expect to see it torn piecemeal in the North-Briton before it is born. If you will come you shall see it, and sing in it amidst a chorus from Salisbury and Gloucester music meeting, great names there, and all well versed in Judas Maccabæus. I wish it were once over; for then I immediately go for a few days to London, and so with Mr. Brown to Aston, though I fear it will rain the whole summer, and Skiddaw will be invisible and inaccessible to mortals.

I have got De la Lande's Voyage through Italy, in eight volumes; he is a member of the Academy of Sciences, and pretty good to read. I have read too an octavo volume of Shenstone's Letters. Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned; but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it: his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring clergymen who wrote verses too.

I have just found the beginning of a letter, which somebody had dropped: I should rather call it first thoughts for the beginning of a letter; for there are many scratches and corrections. As I cannot use it myself (having got a be-

* Consisting of houses on the west side of Hand-Alley, London. Mrs. Olliffe was the aunt here mentioned, who had a share in this estate, and for whom he procured this annuity. She died in 1774, a few months before her nephew.

† Ode for Music on the Duke of Grafton's Installation.

ginning

ginning already of my own). I send it for your use on some great occasion.

" *Dear Sir,*

" After so long silence, the hopes of " pardon, and prospect of forgiveness, " might seem entirely extinct, or at least " very remote, was I not truly sensible " of your goodness and candour, which " is the only asylum that my negligence " can fly to, since every apology would " prove insufficient to counterbalance it, " or alleviate my fault: how then shall " my deficiency presume to make so " bold an attempt, or be able to suffer " the hardships of so rough a cam- " paign?" &c. &c. &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 19, 1769.

I RECEIVED your letter at Southampton; and as I would wish to treat every body according to their own rule and measure of good-breeding, have, against my inclination, waited till now before I answered it, purely out of fear and respect, and an ingenuous diffidence of my own abilities. If you will not take this as an excuse, accept it at least as a well-turned period, which is always my principal concern.

So I proceed to tell you that my health is much improved by the sea, not that I drank it, or bathed in it, as the common people do: no! I only walked by it, and looked upon it. The climate is remarkably mild, even in October and November; no snow has been seen to lie there for these thirty years past; the myrtles grow in the ground against the houses, and Guernsey lilies bloom in every window; the town, clean and well-built, surrounded by its old stone walls with their towers and gateways, stands at the point of a peninsula, and opens full south to an arm of the sea, which, having formed two beautiful bays on each hand of it, stretches away in direct view till it joins the British Channel; it is skirted on either side with gently-rising grounds, clothed with thick wood, and directly cross its mouth rise the high lands of the Isle of Wight at distance, but distinctly seen. In the bosom of the woods (concealed from profane eyes) lie hid the ruins of Nettely abbey; there may be richer and greater houses of religion, but the abbot is content with his situation. See there, at the top of that hanging meadow, under the shade of those old trees that bend into a half circle about it, he is walking slowly (good man!) and bidding his beads for the souls of his benefactors, interred in that venerable pile that lies beneath him. Beyond it (the meadow still descending) nods a thicket of oaks that mask the building, and have excluded a view too garish and luxuriant for a holy eye: only on either hand they leave an opening to the blue glittering sea. Did you not observe how, as that white sail shot by and was lost, he turned and crossed himself, to drive the tempter from him that had thrown that distraction in his way? I should tell you that the ferryman who rowed me, a lusty young fellow, told me that he would not for all the world pass a night at the abbey (there were such things seen near it), though there was a power of money hid there. From thence I went to Salisbury, Wilton, and Stonehenge: but of these things I say no more, they will be published at the University press.

P. S. I must not close my letter without giving you one principal event of my history; which was, that (in the course of my late tour) I set out one morning before five o'clock, the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air, and got to the sea-coast time enough to be at the Sun's levee. I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreathes, and the tide (as it flowed gently in upon the sands) first whitening, then slightly tinged with gold and blue; and all at once a little line of insufferable brightness that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb, and now to a whole one, too glorious to be distinctly seen. It is very odd it makes no figure on paper; yet I shall remember it as long as the sun, or at least as long as I endure. I wonder whether any body ever saw it before? I hardly believe it.

LETTER XCIX.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Beattie.

Pembroke Hall, July 2, 1770.

I REJOICE to hear that you are restored to better state of health, to your books, and to your muse once again. That forced dissipation and exercise we are obliged to fly to as a remedy, when this frail machine goes wrong, is often almost as bad as the distemper we would cure: yet I too have been constrained of late to pursue a like regimen, on account of certain pains in the head (a sensation unknown to me before) and of great dejection of spirits. This, Sir, is the only excuse I have to make you for my long silence, and not (as perhaps you may have figured to yourself) any secret reluctance I had to tell you my mind concerning the specimen you so kindly sent me of your new Poem*: on the contrary, if I had seen any thing of importance to disapprove, I should have hastened to inform you, and never doubted of being forgiven. The truth is, I greatly like all I have seen, and wish to see more. The design is simple, and pregnant with poetical ideas of various kinds, yet seems somehow imperfect at the end. Why may not young Edwin, when necessity has driven him to take up the harp, and assume the profession of a minstrel, do some great and singular service to his country? (what service I must leave to your invention) such as no General, no Statesman, no Moralist, could do without the aid of music, inspiration, and poetry. This will not appear an improbability in those early times, and in a character then held sacred, and respected by all nations: besides, it will be a full answer to all the hermit has said, when he dissuaded him from cultivating these pleasing arts; it will shew their use, and make the best panegyric of our favourite and celestial science. And lastly (what weighs most with me), it will throw more of action, pathos, and interest, into your design, which already abounds in reflection and sentiment. As to description, I have always thought that it made the most graceful ornament of poetry, but never ought to make the subject. Your ideas are new, and borrowed from a mountainous country, the only one that can furnish truly picturesque scenery. Some trifles in the language or versification you will permit me to remark. * * *

I will not enter at present into the merits of your *Essay on Truth*, because I have not yet given it all the attention it deserves, though I have read it through with pleasure; besides, I am partial; for I have always thought David Hume a pernicious writer, and believe he has done as much mischief here as he has in his own country. A turbid and shallow stream often appears to our apprehensions very deep. A professed sceptic can be guided by nothing but his present passions (if he has any) and interests; and to be masters of his philosophy we need not his books or advice, for every child is capable of the same thing, without any study at all. Is not that *naïveté* and good humour, which his admirers celebrate in him, owing to this, that he has continued all his days an infant, but one that unhappily has been taught to read and write? That childish nation, the French, have given him vogue and fashion, and we, as usual, have learned from them to admire him at second hand.

* The Minstrel.

LETTER C.

Mr. Gray to Mr. Nicholls.

It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered, otherwise I had then wrote to you only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday, and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart†.

† He seldom mentioned his mother without a sigh. After his death her gowns and wearing-apparel were found in a trunk in his apartments just as she had left them; it seemed as if he could never take the resolution to open it, in order to distribute them to his female relations, to whom, by his will, he bequeathed them.

Many

Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it for yourself. Pray tell me how your health is: I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself as a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably. In the west part of it, from every eminence, the eye catches some long reach of the Thames and Medway, with all their shipping: in the east the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This sentence is so fine I am quite ashamed; but no matter! you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudden sleeve. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable, that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by any thing but men, and women, and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again very disconsolate, and all alone, for Mr. Brown is gone, and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me: you, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley, &c. &c. I must not wish for you here; besides, I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement.

LETTER CI.

Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton.

May 24, 1771.

My last summer's tour was through Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire, five of the most beautiful counties in the kingdom. The very principal light and capital feature of my journey was the river Wye, which I descended in a boat for near forty miles from Ross to Chepstow. Its banks are a succession of nameless beauties; one out of many you may see not ill described by Mr. Whately, in his Observations on Gardening, under the name of the New-Weir: he has also touched upon two others, Tinterne Abbey and Persfield, both of them famous scenes, and both on the Wye. Monmouth, a town I never heard mentioned, lies on the same river, in a vale that is the delight of my eyes, and the very seat of pleasure. The vale of Abergavenny, Ragland, and Chepstow castles; Ludlow, Malvern-Hills, Hampton-Court, near Lemster; the Leasowes, Hagley, the three cities and their cathedrals; and lastly Oxford (where I passed two days on my return with great satisfaction), were the rest of my acquisitions; and no bad harvest in my opinion; but I made no journal myself, else you should have had it: I have indeed a short one written by the companion of my travels*, that serves to recall and fix the fleeting images of these things.

I have had a cough upon me these three months, which is incurable. The approaching summer I have sometimes had thoughts of spending on the continent; but I have now dropped that intention, and believe my expeditions will terminate in Old Park; but I make no promise, and can answer for nothing; my own employment so sticks in my stomach, and troubles my conscience: and yet travel I must, or cease to exist. Till this year I hardly knew what (mechanical) low spirits were, but now I even tremble at an east wind.

* Mr. Nicholls.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT LETTERS.

SECTION II.

FROM THE LETTERS OF LAURENCE STERNE, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Mr. Sterne to Miss L——.

I HAVE offended her whom I so tenderly love!—what could tempt me to it! but if a beggar was to knock at thy gate, would thou not open the door, and be melted with compassion?——I know thou wouldst, for Pity has erected a temple in thy bosom.—Sweetest, and best of all human passions! let thy web of tenderness cover the pensive form of affliction, and soften the darkest shades of misery! I have re-considered this apology, and, alas! what will it accomplish? Arguments, however finely spun, can never change the nature of things—very true—so a truce with them.

I have lost a very valuable friend by a sad accident, and what is worse, he has left a widow and five young children to lament this sudden stroke.—If real usefulness and integrity of heart could have secured him from this, his friends would not now be mourning his untimely fate.—These dark and seemingly cruel dispensations of Providence often make the best of human hearts complain.—Who can paint the distress of an affectionate mother, made a widow in a moment, weeping in bitterness over a numerous, helpless, and fatherless offspring!—— God! these are thy chastisements, and require (hard task!) a pious acquiescence.

Forgive me this digression, and allow me to drop a tear over a departed friend; and what is more excellent, an honest man. My L.! thou wilt feel all that kindness can inspire in the death of——. The event was sudden, and thy gentle spirit would be more alarmed on that account.—But, my L., thou hast less to lament, as old age was creeping on, and her period of doing good, and being useful, was nearly over.—At sixty years of age the tenement gets fast out of repair, and the lodger with anxiety thinks of a discharge.—In such a situation the poet might well say,

"The soul uneasy," &c.

My L. talks of leaving the country—may a kind angel guide thy steps hither!—Solitude at length grows tiresome.—Thou sayest thou wilt quit the place with regret—I think so too.—Does not something uneasy mingle with the very reflection of leaving it? It is like parting with an old friend, whose temper and company one has long been acquainted with—I think I see you looking twenty times a day at the house—almost counting every brick and pane of glass, and telling them at the same time with a sigh, you are going to leave them.—Oh happy modification of matter! they will remain insensible of thy loss.—But how wilt thou be able to part with thy garden?—The recollection of so many pleasing walks must have endeared it to you. The trees, the shrubs, the flowers, which thou reared with thy own hands—will they not droop and fade away sooner upon thy departure?—Who will be the successor to nurse them in thy absence?—Thou wilt leave thy name upon the myrtle-tree.—

If

If trees, and shrubs, and flowers, could compose an elegy, I should expect a very plaintive one upon this subject.

Adieu, adieu! Believe me ever, ever thine.

LETTER II.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. F——.

York, Tuesday,
Dear Madam, Nov. 19, 1759.

YOUR kind inquiries after my health deserve my best thanks.—What can give one more pleasure than the good wishes of those we value?—I am sorry you give so bad an account of your own health, but hope you will find benefit from tar-water—it has been of infinite service to me.—I suppose my good lady, by what you say in your letter, "that I "am busy writing an extraordinary "book," that your intelligence comes from York—the fountain-head of all chit-chat news—and—no matter.—Now for your desire of knowing the reason of my turning author? why truly I am tired of employing my brains for other people's advantage.—'Tis a foolish sacrifice I have made for some years to an ungrateful person.—I depend much upon the candour of the public, but I shall not pick out a jury to try the merit of my book amongst ——, and—till you read my Tristram, do not, like some people, condemn it.—Laugh I am sure you will at some passages.—I have hired a small house in the Minster Yard for my wife and daughter—the latter is to begin dancing, &c.: if I cannot leave her a fortune, I will at least give her an education.—As I shall publish my works very soon, I shall be in town by March, and shall have the pleasure of meeting with you.—All your friends are well, and ever hold you in the same estimation that your sincere friend does.

Adieu, dear lady; believe me, with every wish for your happiness, your most faithful, &c.

LETTER III.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

Dear H——, Coxwould, July 28, 1761.

I SYMPATHIZED for, or with you, on the detail you give me of your late agitations—and would willingly have taken my horse, and trotted to the oracle to have inquired into the etymology of all your sufferings, had I not been assured, that all that evacuation of bilious matter, with all that abdominal motion attending it (both which are equal to a month's purgation and exercise), will have left you better than it found you—Need one go to D—, to be told that all kind of mild (mark, I am going to talk more foolishly than your apothecary), opening, saponaceous, dirty-shirt, suds-washing liquors are proper for you, and consequently all styptical potations, death and destruction?—if you had not shut up your gall-ducts by these, the glauber salts could not have hurt—as it was, 'twas like a match to the gunpowder, by raising a fresh combustion, as all physic does at first, so that you have been let off—nitre, brimstone, and charcoal (which is blackness itself), all at one blast—'twas well the piece did not burst, for I think it underwent great violence, and, as it is proof, will, I hope, do much service in this militating world.—Panty* is mistaken, I quarrel with no one.—There was that coxcomb of —— in the house, who lost temper with me for no reason upon earth but that I could not fall down and worship a brazen image of learning and eloquence, which he set up, to the persecution of all true believers—I sat down upon *his altar*, and whistled in the time of his divine service—and broke down his carved work, and kicked his incense pot to the D——; so he retreated *sed non sine fœle in corde suo*.—I have wrote a clerum, whether I shall take my doctor's degrees or no—I am much in doubt, but I trow not.—I go on with Tristram—I have bought seven hundred books at a purchase dog cheap—and many good—and I have been a week getting them set up in my best room here—why do not you transport yours to town? but I talk like a fool.—This will just catch you at your spaw—I wish you *incolumen apud Londinum*—do you go there for good and all—or ill?—I am, dear cousin, yours affectionately.

* The Reverend Mr. R—— L——.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Sterne to J—H—S,—Esq.

Coxwould,
Dear H——, [about Augus] 1761.

I REJOICE you are in London—rest you there in peace; here 'tis the devil.—You was a good prophet.—I wish myself back again, as you told me I should—but not because a thin, death-doing, pestiferous, north-east wind blows in a line directly from Crazy-castle turret full upon me in this cuckoldy retreat (for I value the north-east wind and all its powers not a straw),—but the transition from rapid motion to absolute rest was too violent—I should have walked about the streets of York ten days, as a proper medium to have passed through, before I entered upon my rest.—I staid but a moment, and I have been here but a few, to satisfy me I have not managed my miseries like a wise man—and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandeism into me, which will not suffer me to think two moments, upon any grave subject, I would else, just now lie down and die—die—and yet, in half an hour's time, I'll lay a guinea, I shall be as merry as a monkey—and as mischievous too, and forget it all—so that this is but a copy of the present train running across my brain.—And so you think this cursed stupid—but that, my dear H., depends much upon the *quoti horâ* of your shabby clock, if the pointer of it is in any quarter between ten in the morning or four in the afternoon—I give it up—or if the day is obscured by dark engendering clouds of either wet or dry weather, I am still lost—but who knows but it may be five—and the day as fine a day as ever shone upon the earth since the destruction of Sodom—and peradventure your honour may have got a good hearty dinner to-day, and eat and drank your intellectuals into a placidulish and a blandulish amalmaga—to bear nonsense, so much for that.

'Tis as cold and churlish just now, as (if God had not pleased it to be so) it ought to have been in bleak December, and therefore I am glad you are where you are, and where (I repeat it again) I wish I was also—Curse of poverty, and absence from those we love!—they are two great evils which embitter all things—and yet with the first I am not haunted much.—As to matrimony, I should be a beast to rail at it, for my wife is easy—but the world is not—and had I staid from her a second longer it would have been a burning shame—else she declares herself happier without me—but not in anger is this declaration made—but in pure sober good sense, built on sound experience—she hopes you will be able to strike a bargain for me before this time twelvemonth, to lead a bear round Europe: and from this hope from you, I verily believe it is, that you are so high in her favour at present—She swears you are a fellow of wit, though humourous; a funny, jolly soul, though somewhat splenetic; and (bating the love of women) as honest as *gold*—how do you like the simile?—Oh, Lord! now you are going to Ranelagh to-night, and I am sitting, sorrowful as the prophet was, when the voice cried out to him and said, "What dost thou here, Elijah?"—'Tis well the spirit does not make the same at Coxwould—for unless for the few sheep left me to take care of, in this wilderness, I might as well, nay better, be at Mecca—When we find we can, by a shifting of places, run away from ourselves, what think you of a jaunt there, before we finally pay a visit to the *vale of Jehosaphat?*—As ill a fame as we have, I trust I shall one day or other see you face to face—so tell the two colonels, if they love good company, to live righteously and soberly, as *you do*, and then they will have no doubts or dangers within or without them—present my best and warmest wishes to them, and advise the eldest to prop up his spirits, and get a rich dowager before the conclusion of the peace—why will not the advice suit both, *par nobile fratrum?*

To-morrow morning (if Heaven permit) I begin the fifth volume of Shandy—I care not a curse for the critics—I'll load my vehicle with what goods he sends me,—and they make take 'em off my hands, or let them alone—I am very valorous—and 'tis in proportion as we retire from the world, and see it in its true dimensions, that we despise it—no bad rant!—God above bless you! You know I am your affectionate cousin.

What

What few remain of the Demoniacs, greet——and write me a letter, if you are able, as foolish as this.

LETTER V.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D——

Coxwould, Sept. 21, 1761.

I RETURN to my new habitation, fully determined to write as hard as can be, and thank you most cordially, my dear lady, for your letter of congratulation upon my Lord Fauconberg's having presented me with the curacy of this place—though your congratulation comes somewhat of the latest, as I have been possessed of it some time.—I hope I have been of some service to his Lordship, and he has sufficiently requited me.—— 'Tis seventy guineas a year in my pocket, though worth a hundred—but it obliges me to have a curate to officiate at Sutton and Stillington.—'Tis within a mile of his Lordship's seat and park. 'Tis a very agreeable ride out in the chaise I purchased for my wife.—Lyd* has a poney which she delights in.—Whilst they take these diversions, I am scribbling away at my Tristram.—These two volumes are, I think, the best.—I shall write as long as I live; 'tis, in fact, my hobby-horse: and so much am I delighted with my uncle Toby's imaginary character, that I am become an enthusiast.—My Lydia helps to copy for me—and my wife knits, and listens as I read her chapters.—The coronation of his Majesty (whom God preserve!) has cost me the value of an ox, which is to be roasted whole in the middle of the town, and my parishioners will, I suppose, be very merry upon the occasion.—You will then be in town—and feast your eyes with a sight, which 'tis to be hoped will not be in either of our powers to see again—— for in point of age we have about twenty years the start of his Majesty.—And now, my dear friend, I must finish this—and with every wish for your happiness, conclude myself your most sincere well-wisher and friend.

* His daughter.

LETTER VI.

Mr. Sterne to David Garrick, Esq.

My dear Friend, Paris, Jan. 31, 1762.

THINK not, because I have been a fortnight in this metropolis without writing to you, that therefore I have not had you and Mrs. Garrick a hundred times in my head and heart—heart! yes, yes, say you—but I must not waste paper in *badinage* this post, whatever I do the next. Well! here I am, my friend, as much improved in my health, for the time, as ever your friendship could wish, or at least your faith give credit to—by the bye I am somewhat worse in my intellectuals, for my head is turned round with what I see, and the unexpected honours I have met with here. Tristram was almost as much known here as in London, at least among your men of condition and learning, and has got me introduced into so many circles ('tis *comme à Londres*). I have just now a fortnight's dinners and suppers upon my hands.—My application to the Count de Choiseul goes on swimmingly, for not only Mr. Pelletiere (who, by the bye, sends ten thousand civilities to you and Mrs. Garrick) has undertaken my affair, but the Count de Limbourgh—the Baron d'Holbach, has offered any security for the inoffensiveness of my behaviour in France—'tis more, you rogue, than you will do.—This Baron is one of the most learned nobleman here, the great protector of wits, and the *Sçavans* who are no wits—keeps open house three days a week—his house is now, as yours was to me, my own—he lives at great expence.—'Twas an odd incident when I was introduced to the Count de Bissie, which I was at his desire—I found him reading Tristram—this grandee does me great honours, and gives me leave to go a private way through his apartments into the Palais Royal, to view the Duke of Orleans' collections, every day I have time.—I have been at the doctors of Sorbonne—I hope in a fortnight to break through, or rather from, the delights of this place, which, in the *sçavoir vivre*, exceed all the places, I believe, in this section of the globe——

I am going, when this letter is wrote, with Mr. Fox and Mr. Maccartney to

Versailles—the next morning I wait upon Mons. Titon, in company with Mr. Maccartney, who is known to him, to deliver your commands. I have bought you the pamphlet upon theatrical, or rather tragical declamation — I have bought another in verse, worth reading, and you will receive them, with what I can pick up this week, by a servant of Mr. Hodges, whom he is sending back to England.

I was last night with Mr. Fox to see Mademoiselle Claron, in *Iphigene*—she is extremely great—would to God you had one or two like her—what a luxury, to see you with one of such powers in the same interesting scene—but 'tis too much —Ah! Preville! thou art Mercury himself.—By virtue of taking a couple of boxes, we have bespoke this week, *The Frenchman in London*, in which Preville is to send us home to supper all happy—— I mean about fifteen or sixteen English of distinction, who are now here, and live well with each other.

I am under great obligations to Mr. Pitt, who has behaved in every respect to me like a man of good breeding, and good nature—in a post or two, I will write again—Foley is an honest soul—I could write six volumes of what has passed comically in this great scene, since these last fourteen days—but more of this hereafter.—We are all going into mourning; nor you, nor Mrs. Garrick, would know me, if you met me in my *remise*—bless you both! Service to Mrs. Denis, Adieu, adieu!

LETTER VII.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D——.

London*, Feb. 1, 1762.

Your Ladyship's kind inquiries after my health are indeed kind, and of a piece with the rest of your character. Indeed I am very ill, having broke a vessel in my lungs—hard writing in the summer, together with preaching, which I have not strength for, is ever fatal to me—but I cannot avoid the latter yet, and the former is too pleasurable to be given up—I believe I shall try if the south of France will not be of service to me—his G. of Y. has most humanely given me the permission for a year or two—I shall set off with great hopes of its efficacy, and shall write to my wife and daughter to come and join me at Paris, else my stay could not be so long. —"Le Fevre's story has beguiled your "Ladyship of your tears," and the thought of the accusing spirit flying up to heaven's chancery with the oath, you are kind enough to say is sublime—my friend Mr. Garrick thinks so too, and I am most vain of his approbation—your Ladyship's opinion adds not a little to my vanity.

I wish I had time to take a little excursion to Bath, were it only to thank you for all the obliging things you say in your letter—but 'tis impossible—accept at least my warmest thanks—If I could tempt my friend Mr. H. to come to France, I should be truly happy—If I can be of any service to you at Paris, command him who is, and ever will be, your Ladyship's faithful, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. Sterne, York.

My Dear, Paris, May 16, 1762.

It is a thousand to one that this reaches you before you have set out—however, I take the chance—you will receive one wrote last night, the moment you get to Mr. E. and to wish you joy of your arrival in town—to that letter which you will find in town, I have nothing to add that I can think on—for I have almost drain'd my brains dry upon the subject.—For God's sake rise early and gallop away in the cool—and always see that you have not forgot your baggage in changing post-chaises.—You will find good tea upon the road from York to Dover—only bring a little to carry you from Calais to Paris—give the Custom-house officers what I told you—at Calais give more, if you have much Scotch snuff—but as tobacco is good here, you had best bring a Scotch mill and make it yourself, that is, order your valet to manufacture it—'twill keep him out of mischief.—I would advise you to take three days in coming up, for fear of heating yourselves—See that they do not give you a bad

* This letter, though dated from *London*, was evidently written at *Paris*.

bad vehicle, when a better is in the yard, but you will look sharp—drink small Rhenish to keep you cool (that is if you like it). Live well, and deny yourselves nothing your hearts wish. So God in heaven prosper and go along with you—kiss my Lydia, and believe me both affectionately yours.

LETTER IX.

From the same to the same.

My Dear, Paris, May 31, 1762.

THERE have no mails arrived here till this morning, for three posts, so I expected with great impatience a letter from you and Lydia—and lo! it is arrived. You are as busy as Throp's wife, and by the time you receive this, you will be busier still—I have exhausted all my ideas about your journey—and what is needful for you to do before and during it—so I write only to tell you I am well—Mr. Colebrooks, the minister of Swisserland's secretary, I got this morning to write a letter for you to the governor of the Custom-house office at Calais—it shall be sent you next post.—You must be cautious about Scotch snuff—take half a pound in your pocket, and make Lyd do the same. 'Tis well I bought you a chaise—there is no getting one in Paris now, but at an enormous price—for they are all sent to the army, and such a one as your's we have not been able to match for forty guineas, for a friend of mine who is going from hence to Italy—the weather was never known to set in so hot, as it has done the latter end of this month, so he and his party are to get into his chaises, by four in the morning, and travel till nine—and not stir out again till six;—but I hope this severe heat will abate by the time you come here—however, I beg of you once more to take special care of heating your blood in travelling, and come *tout doucement*, when you find the heat too much—I shall look impatiently for intelligence from you, and hope to hear all goes well; that you conquer all difficulties, that you have received your passport, my picture, &c. Write and tell me something of every thing. I long to see you both, you may be assured, my dear wife and child, after so long a separation——and write me a line directly, that I may have all the notice you can give me, that I may have apartments ready and fit for you when you arrive.—For my own part I shall continue writing to you a fortnight longer—present my respects to all friends—you have bid Mr. C. get my visitations at P. done for me, &c. &c. If any offers are made about the inclosure at Rascal, they must be inclosed to me—nothing that is fairly proposed shall stand still on my score. Do all for the best, as He who guides all things will I hope do for us—so Heaven preserve you both—believe me your affectionate, &c.

Love to my Lydia—I have bought her a gold watch to present to her when she comes.

LETTER X.

Mr. Sterne to Lady D——.

Paris, July 9, 1762.

I WILL not send your Ladyship the trifles you bid me purchase without a line. I am very well pleased with Paris—indeed I meet with so many civilities amongst the people here, that I must sing their praises—the French have a great deal of urbanity in their composition, and to stay a little time amongst them will be agreeable.—I splutter French so as to be understood—but I have had a droll adventure here, in which my Latin was of some service to me—I had hired a chaise and a horse to go about seven miles into the country, but, Shandean-like, did not take notice that the horse was almost dead when I took him.—Before I got half-way, the poor animal dropped down dead—so I was forced to appear before the Police, and began to tell my story in French, which was, that the poor beast had to do with a worse beast than himself, namely, his master, who had driven him all the day before (Jehu like), and that it had neither had corn, nor hay, therefore I was not to pay for the horse—but I might as well have whistled, as have spoke French, and I believe my Latin was equal to my uncle Toby's Lilabulero—being not understood because of its purity, but by dint of words I forced my judge to do me justice—no common thing, by the way, in France.—My wife and daughter are arrived—the latter does nothing but look out of the window, and complain of the

torment of being frizled.—I wish she may ever remain a child of nature—I hate children of art.

I hope this will find your Ladyship well—and that you will be kind enough to direct to me at Toulouse, which place I shall set out for very soon. I am, with truth and sincerity, your Ladyship's most faithful, &c.

LETTER XI.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. E.

Dear Sir, Paris, July 12, 1762.

My wife and daughter arrived here safe and sound on Thursday, and are in high raptures with the speed and pleasantness of their journey, and particularly of all they see and meet with here. But in their journey from York to Paris nothing has given them a more sensible and lasting pleasure, than the marks of kindness they received from you and Mrs. E.—The friendship, good-will, and politeness of my two friends I never doubted to me, or mine, and I return you both all a grateful man is capable of, which is merely my thanks. I have taken, however, the liberty of sending an Indian taffety, which Mrs. E. must do me the honour to wear for my wife's sake, who would have got it made up, but that Mr. Stanhope, the Consul of Algiers, who sets off to-morrow morning for London, has been so kind (I mean his lady) as to take charge of it; and we had but just time to procure it: and had we missed that opportunity, as we should have been obliged to have left it behind us at Paris, we knew not when or how to get it to our friend.—I wish it had been better worth a paragragh. If there is any thing we can buy or procure for you here (intelligence included), you have a right to command me—for I am yours, with my wife and girl's kind love to you and Mrs. E.

LETTER XII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse,

My dear Foley, August 14, 1762.

After many turnings *(alias* digressions), to say nothing of downright overthrows, stops, and delays, we have arrived in three weeks at Toulouse, and are now settled in our houses with servants, &c. about us, and look as composed as if we had been here seven years.—In our journey we suffered so much from the heats, it gives me pain to remember it.—I never saw a cloud from Paris to Nismes, half as broad as a twenty-four sols piece.—Good God! we were toasted, roasted, grill'd, stew'd and carbonaded on one side or other all the way—and being all done enough *(assez cuits)* in the day, we were eat up at night by bugs, and other unswept-out vermin, the legal inhabitants (if length of possession gives right) of every inn we lay at—Can you conceive a worse accident than that in such a journey, in the hottest day and hour of it, four miles from either tree or shrub which could cast a shade of the size of one of Eve's fig-leaves—that we should break a hind wheel in ten thousand pieces, and be obliged in consequence to sit five hours on a gravelly road, without one drop of water, or possibility of getting any?—To mend the matter, my two postillions were two dough-hearted fools, and fell a crying—Nothing was to be done! By Heaven, quoth I, pulling off my coat and waistcoat, something shall be done, for I'll thrash you both within an inch of your lives—and then make you take each of you a horse, and ride like two devils to the next post, for a cart to carry my baggage, and a wheel to carry ourselves.—Our luggage weighed ten quintals—'twas the fair of Baucaire—all the world was going or returning—we were ask'd by every soul who pass'd by us, if we were going to the fair of Baucaire—No wonder, quoth I, we have goods enough! *Vous avez raison, mes amis.*

Well! here we are after all, my dear friend—and most deliciously placed at the extremity of the town, in an excellent house well furnished, and elegant beyond any thing I looked for—'Tis built in the form of a hotel, with a pretty court towards the town—and behind, the best garden in Toulouse, laid out in serpentine walks, and so large that the company in our quarter usually come to walk there in the evenings, for which they have my consent—"the more the merrier."—The house consists of a good *salle à manger* above stairs joining to the very great *salle à compagnie* as large as the Baron d'Holbach's; three handsome bedchambers with dressing-rooms to them—

below

below stairs two very good rooms for myself, one to study in, the other to see company.—I have moreover cellars round the court, and all other offices—Of the same landlord I have bargained to have the use of a country-house which he has two miles out of town, so that myself and all my family have nothing more to do than to take our hats and remove from the one to the other.—My landlord is moreover to keep the gardens in order—and what do you think I am to pay for all this? neither more nor less than thirty pounds a year—all things are cheap in proportion—so we shall live for very very little.—I dined yesterday with Mr. H——; he is most pleasantly situated, and they are all well.—As for the books you have received for D——, the bookseller was a fool not to send the bill along with them. I will write to him about it.—I wish you was with me for two months; it would cure you of all evils ghostly and bodily—but this, like many other wishes both for you and myself, must have its completion elsewhere—Adieu, my kind friend, and believe that I love you as much from inclination as reason, for I am most truly yours.

My wife and girl join in compliments to you—My best respects to my worthy Baron d'Holbach and all that society—Remember me to my friend Mr. Panchaud.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

My dear H. Toulouse, Oct. 19, 1762.

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday—so it has been travelling from Crazy Castle to Toulouse full eighteen days—If I had nothing to stop me I would engage to set out this morning, and knock at Crazy Castle gates in three days less time—by which time I should find you and the Colonel, Panty, &c. all alone—the season I most like and wish to be with you—I rejoice from my heart, down to my reins, that you have snatch'd so many happy and sunshiny days out of the hands of the blue devils—If we live to meet and join our forces as heretofore, we will give these gentry a drubbing—and turn them for ever out of their usurped citadel—some legions of them have been put to flight already by your operations this last campaign—and I hope to have a hand in dispersing the remainder the first time my dear cousin sets up his banners again under the square tower——But what art thou meditating with axes and hammers?—"I know the pride and the naughtiness of thy heart," and thou lovest the sweet visions of architraves, friezes, and pediments with their tympanums, and thou hast found out a pretence, *à raison de cinq cent livres sterling* to be laid out in four years, &c. &c. (so as not to be felt, which is always added by the d——l as a bait) to justify thyself unto thyself—It may be very wise to do this—but 'tis wiser to keep one's money in one's pocket, whilst there are wars without and rumours of wars within. St. ——advises his disciples to sell both coat and waistcoat—and go rather without shirt or sword, than leave no money in their scrip to go to Jerusalem with—Now those *quatre ans consecutifs*, my dear Anthony, are the most precious morsels of thy life to come (in this world), and thou wilt do well to enjoy that morsel without cares, calculations, and curses, and damns, and debts—for as sure as stone is stone, and mortar is mortar, &c. 'twill be one of the many works of thy repentance—But after all, if the Fates have decreed it, as you and I have some time supposed it on account of your generosity, "that you are never "to be a monied man," the decree will be fulfilled whether you adorn your castle and line it with cedar, and paint it within side and without side with vermillion, or not—*et cela étant* (having a bottle of Frontiniac and glass at my right hand) I drink, dear Anthony, to thy health and happiness, and to the final accomplishments of all thy lunary and sublunary projects.—For six weeks together, after I wrote my last letter to you, my projects were many stories higher, for I was all that time, as I thought, journeying on to the other world—I fell ill of an epidemic vile fever which killed hundreds about me—The physicians here are the errantest charlatans in Europe, or the most ignorant of all pretending fools—I withdrew what was left of me out of their hands, and recommended my affairs entirely to Dame Nature—She (dear goddess) has saved me in fifty different pinching bouts, and I begin to have a kind of enthusiasm now in her favour, and in my own, that one or two more escapes will

make me believe I shall leave you all at last by translation, and not by fair death. I am now stout and foolish again as a happy man can wish to be—and am busy playing the fool with my uncle Toby, whom I have got soused over head and ears in love.—I have many hints and projects for other works; all will go on I trust as I wish in this matter. —When I have reaped the benefit of this winter at Toulouse—I cannot see I have any thing more to do with it; therefore, after having gone with my wife and girl to Bagnieres, I shall return from whence I came——Now my wife wants to stay another year to save money, and this opposition of wishes, though it will not be as sour as lemon, yet 'twill not be as sweet as sugar-candy.—I wish T—— would lead Sir Charles to Toulouse; 'tis as good as any town in the south of France—for my own part, 'tis not to my taste—but I believe the ground-work of my *ennui* is more to the eternal platitude of the French character—little variety, no originality in it at all—than to any other cause—for they are very civil—but civility itself, in that uniform, wearies and bodders one to death—If I do not mind, I shall grow most stupid and sententious —Miss Shandy is hard at it with music, dancing, and French speaking, in the last of which she does *a merveille*, and speaks it with an excellent accent, considering she practises within sight of the Pyrenean mountains.—If the snows will suffer me, I propose to spend two or three months at Bareges, or Bagnieres, but my dear wife is against all schemes of additional expence—which wicked propensity (though not of despotic power) yet I cannot suffer—though by the bye laudable enough—But she may talk—I will do my own way, and she will acquiesce without a word of debate on the subject.—Who can say so much in praise of his wife? Few I trow.—M—— is out of town vintaging—so write to me, *Monsieur Sterne gentilhomme Anglois*—'twill find me—We are as much out of the road of all intelligence here as at the Cape of Good Hope—so write a long nonsensical letter like this, now and then, to me—in which say nothing but what may be shewn (though I love every paragraph and special stroke of your pen, others need not), for you must know, a letter no sooner arrives from England, but curiosity is upon her knees to know the contents.—Adieu, dear H. believe me your affectionate, &c.

We have had bitter cold weather here these fourteen days—which has obliged us to sit with whole pagells of wood lighted up to our noses—'tis a dear article —but every thing else being extremely cheap, Madame keeps an excellent good house, with *soupe, bouilli, roti*—&c. &c. for two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

LETTER XIV.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse,
My dear Foley, Nov. 9, 1762.

I HAVE had this week your letter on my table, and hope you will forgive my not answering it sooner—and even to-day I can but write you ten lines, being engaged at Mrs. M—'s. I would not omit one post more acknowledging the favour—In a few posts I will write you a long one gratis, that is for love—Thank you for having done what I desired you —and for the future direct to me under cover at Monsieur Brousse's—I receive all letters through him, more punctual and sooner than when left at the post-house.

H——'s family greet you with mine —we are much together, and never forget you—forget me not to the Baron—and all the circle—nor to your domestic circle.

I am got pretty well, and sport much with my uncle Toby in the volume I am now fabricating for the laughing part of the world—for the melancholy part of it, I have nothing but my prayers—so God help them.—I shall hear from you in a post or two at least after you receive this —in the mean time, dear Foley, adieu, and believe no man wishes or esteems you more than your, &c.

LETTER XV.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse, Wednesday,
Dear Foley, Dec. 3, 1762.

I HAVE for this last fortnight every post-day gone to Messrs. B—— and sons, in expectation of the pleasure of a letter from you with the remittance I desired you to send me here.—When a man has no more than half a dozen guineas in his pocket—just a thousand miles from home

—and

—and in a country, where he can as soon raise the d—l, as a six livre piece to go to market with, in case he has changed his last guinea—you will not envy my situation—God bless you—remit me the balance due upon the receipt of this.—We are all at H—'s, practising a play we are to act here this Christmas holidays—all the Dramatis Personæ are of the English, of which we have a happy society living together like brothers and sisters—Your banker here has just sent me word the tea Mr. H. wrote for is to be delivered into my hands—'tis all one into whose hands the treasure falls—we shall pay Brousse for it the day we get it—We join in our most friendly respects, and believe me, dear Foley, truly yours.

LETTER XVI.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse,
My dear Foley, Dec. 17, 1762.

THE post after I wrote last, I received yours with the inclosed draught upon the receiver, for which I return you all thanks—I have received this day likewise the box and tea all safe and sound—so we shall all of us be in our cups this Christmas, and drink without fear or stint—We begin to live extremely happy, and are all together every night—fiddling, laughing, and singing, and cracking jokes. You will scarce believe the news I tell you—There are a company of English strollers arrived here, who are to act comedies all the Christmas, and are now busy in making dresses and preparing some of our best comedies—Your wonder will cease, when I inform you these strollers are your friends with the rest of our society, to whom I proposed this scheme *soulagement*—and I assure you we do well.—The next week, with a grand orchestra, we play the Busy Body—and the Journey to London the week after; but I have some thoughts of adapting it to your situation—and making it the Journey to Toulouse, which, with the change of half a dozen scenes, may be easily done.—Thus, my dear F. for want of something better we have recourse to ourselves, and strike out the best amusements we can from such materials.—My kind love and friendship to all my true friends—My service to the rest. H—'s family have just left me, having been this last week with us—they will be with me all the holidays. In summer we shall visit them, and so balance hospitalities. Adieu, yours most truly.

LETTER XVII.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse,
Dear Foley, March 29, 1763.

—THOUGH that's a mistake! I mean the date of the place, for I write at Mr. H—'s in the country, and have been there with my people all the week—"How does Tristram do?" you say in yours to him—faith, but so so—the worst of human maladies is poverty—though that is a second lie—for poverty of spirit is worse than poverty of purse by ten thousand *per cent.*—I inclose you a remedy for the one, a draught of a hundred and thirty pounds, for which I insist upon a rescription by the very return—or I will send you and all your commissaries to the d——l.—I do not hear they have tasted of one fleshy banquet all this Lent—you will make an excellent *grillé*, P—they can make nothing of him, but *bouillon*—I mean my other two friends no ill—so shall send them a reprieve, as they acted out of necessity—not choice—My kind respects to Baron d'Holbach, and all his household—Say all that's kind for me to my other friends—you know how much, dear Foley, I am yours.

I have not five louis to vapour with in this land of coxcombs—My wife's compliments.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

Dear Foley, Toulouse, April 18, 1763.

I THANK you for your punctuality in sending me the rescription, and for your box by the courier, which came safe by last post.—I was not surprised much with your account of Lord ***** being obliged to give way—and for the rest, all follows in course.—I suppose you will endeavour to fish and catch something for yourself in these troubled waters—at least I wish you all a reasonable man can wish for himself—which is wishing enough for you—all the rest is in the brain—Mr. Woodhouse (whom you know) is also here—he is a most amiable worthy man, and I have the pleasure of having him

much with me—in a short time he proceeds to Italy.—The first week in June, I decamp like a patriarch with my whole household, to pitch our tents for three months at the foot of the Pyrenean Hills at Bagnieres, where I expect much health and much amusement from the concourse of adventurers from all corners of the earth.—Mrs. M—— sets out, at the same time, for another part of the Pyrenean Hills, at Courtray—from whence to Italy—This is the general plan of operation here—except that I have some thoughts of spending the winter at Florence, and crossing over with my family to Leghorn by water—and in April of returning by way of Paris home—but this is a sketch only, for in all things I am governed by circumstances—so that what is fit to be done on Monday, may be very unwise on Saturday—On all days of the week believe me yours, with unfeigned truth.

P. S. All compliments to my Parisian friends.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

Toulouse, May 21, 1763.

I TOOK the liberty, three weeks ago, to desire you would be so kind as to send me fourscore pounds, having received a letter the same post from my agent, that he would order the money to be paid to your correspondent in London in a fortnight.—It is some disappointment to me that you have taken no notice of my letter, especially as I told you we waited for the money before we set out for Bagnieres—and so little distrust had I that such a civility would be refused me, that we have actually had all our things packed up these eight days, in hourly expectation of receiving a letter.—Perhaps my good friend has waited till he heard the money was paid in London—but you might have trusted to my honour—that all the cash in your iron box (and all the bankers in Europe put together) could not have tempted me to say the thing that is not.—I hope before this you will have received an account of the money being paid in London.—But it would have been taken kindly, if you had wrote me word you would transmit me the money when you had received it, but no sooner; for Mr. R— of Montpellier, though I know him not, yet knows enough of me to have given me credit for a fortnight for ten times the sum. I am, dear F—, your friend and hearty well-wisher.

I saw the family of the H——— yesterday, and asked them if you was in the land of the living. They said yea—for they had just received a letter from you. —After all, I heartily forgive you—for you have done me a signal service in mortifying me, and it is this, I am determined to grow rich upon it.

Adieu, and God send you wealth and happiness—All compliments to——Before April next I am obliged to revisit your metropolis in my way to England.

LETTER XX.

From the same to the same.

Toulouse,
My dear Foley, June 9, 1763.

I THIS moment received yours—consequently the moment I got it I sat down to answer it—So much for a logical inference.

Now believe me I had never wrote you so testy a letter, had I not both loved and esteemed you—and it was merely in vindication of the rights of friendship that I wrote in a way as if I was hurt—for neglect me in your heart, I knew you could not, without cause; which my heart told me I never had—or will ever give you:—I was the best friends with you that ever I was in my life, before my letter had got a league, and pleaded the true excuse for my friend, "That he "was oppressed with a multitude of "business." Go on, my dear F., and have but that excuse (so much do I regard your interest), that I would be content to suffer a real evil without future murmuring — but in truth, my disappointment was partly chimerical at the bottom, having a letter of credit for two hundred pounds from a person I never saw, by me—but which, out of nicety of temper, I would not make any use of —I set out in two days for Bagnieres, but direct to me to Brousse, who will forward all my letters.—Dear F—, adieu.—Believe me yours affectionately.

LETTER XXI.

From the same to the same.

Montpellier,
My dear Friend, Jan. 5, 1764.

You see I cannot pass over the fifth of the month without thinking of you and writing to you---The last is a periodical habit---The first is from my heart, and I do it oftener than I remember---however, from both motives together I maintain I have a right to the pleasure of a single life---be it only to tell me how your watch goes---You know how much happier it would make me to know that all things belonging to you went on well. ---You are going to have them all to yourself (I hear), and that Mr. S—— is true to his first intention of leaving business---I hope this will enable you to accomplish yours in a shorter time, that you may get to your long wished for retreat of tranquillity and silence---When you have got to your fire-side, and into your arm-chair (and, by the bye, have another to spare for a friend), and are so much a sovereign as to sit in your furred cap, if you like it, though I should not (for a man's ideas are at least the cleaner for being dressed decently), why then it will be a miracle if I do not glide in like a ghost upon you---and in a very unghost-like fashion help you off with a bottle of your best wine.

Jan. 15.---It does not happen every day that a letter begun in the most perfect health, should be concluded in the greatest weakness---I wish the vulgar high and low do not say it was a judgment upon me, for taking all this liberty with ghosts---Be it as it may---I took a ride, when the first part of this was wrote, towards Perenas---and returned home in a shivering fit, though I ought to have been in a fever, for I had tired my beast; and he was as unmovable as Don Quixote's wooden horse, and my arm was half dislocated in whipping him---This, quoth I, is inhuman---No, says a peasant on foot behind me, I'll drive him home---so he laid on his posteriors, but 'twas needless---as his face was turned towards Montpellier, he began to trot.---But to return, this fever has confined me ten days in my bed---I have suffered in this scuffle with death terribly---but unless the spirit of prophecy deceive me---I shall not die but live---in the mean time, dear F. let us live as merrily, but as innocently as we can---It has ever been as good, if not better, than a bishopric to me---and I desire no other ---Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me yours.

Please to give the inclosed to Mr. T---, and tell him I thank him cordially from my heart for his great good-will.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. F.

Montpellier, Feb. 1, 1764.

I am preparing, my dear Mrs. F. to to leave France, for I am heartily tired of it---That insipidity there is in French characters has disgusted your friend Yorick.---I have been dangerously ill, and cannot think that the sharp air of Montpellier has been of service to me---and so my physicians told me when they had me under their hands for above a month---if you stay any longer here, Sir, it will be fatal to you---And why, good people, were you not kind enough to tell me this sooner?---After having discharged them, I told Mrs. Sterne that I should set out for England very soon; but as she chooses to remain in France for two or three years, I have no objection, except that I wish my girl in England.---The states of Languedoc are met---'tis a fine raree-show, with the usual accompaniments of fiddles, bears, and puppet-shows.---I believe I shall step into my post-chaise with more alacrity to fly from these sights, than a Frenchman would fly to them---and except a tear at parting with my little slut, I shall be in high spirits; and every step I take that brings me nearer England, will, I think, help to set this poor frame to rights. Now pray write to me, directed to Mr. F. at Paris, and tell me what I am to bring you over---How do I long to greet all my friends! few do I value more than yourself.---My wife chooses to go to Montauban, rather than stay here, in which I am truly passive.---If this should not find you at Bath, I hope it will be forwarded to you, as I wish to fulfill your commissions---and so adieu ---Accept every warm wish for your health, and believe me ever yours.

P. S. My physicians have almost poisoned me with what they call *bouillons rafraichissants*---'tis a cock flayed alive and boiled with poppy seeds, then pounded in a mor-

a mortar, afterwards passed thro' a sieve —There is to be one crawfish in it, and I was gravely told it must be a male one—a female would do me more hurt than good.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

My dear Lydia, Paris, May 15, 1764.

By this time I suppose your mother and self are fixed at Montauban, and I therefore direct to your banker, to be delivered to you.—I acquiesced in your staying in France—likewise it was your mother's wish—but I must tell you both (that unless your health had not been a plea made use of) I should have wished you both to return with me.—I have sent you the Spectators, and other books, particularly Metastasio; but I beg my girl to read the former, and only make the latter her amusement.—I hope you have not forgot my last request, to make no friendships with the French women—not that I think ill of them all, but sometimes women of the best principles are the most *insinuating*—nay I am so jealous of you, that I should be miserable were I to see you had the least grain of coquetry in your composition.—You have enough to do—for I have also sent you a guittar —and as you have no genius for drawing (though you never could be made to believe it), pray waste not your time about it—Remember to write to me as to a friend—in short, whatever comes into your little head, and then it will be natural.—If your mother's rheumatism continues, and she chooses to go to Bagnieres —tell her not to be stopped for want of money, for my purse shall be as open as my heart. I have preached at the Ambassador's chapel---Hezekiah---(an odd subject your mother will say). There was a concourse of all nations, and religions too.---I shall leave Paris in a few days.---I am lodged in the same hotel with Mr. T——;---they are good and generous souls---tell your mother that I hope she will write to me, and that when she does so, I may also receive a letter from my Lydia.

Kiss your mother from me, and believe me your affectionate, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Sterne to J--- H--- S---, Esq.

September 4, 1764.

Now, my dear dear Anthony---I do not think a week or ten days playing the good fellow (at this very time) at Scarborough so abominable a thing---but if a man could get there cleverly, and every soul in the house in the mind to try what could be done in furtherance thereof, I have no one to consult in this affair ---therefore, as a man may do worse things, the English of all which is this, that I am going to leave a few poor sheep here in the wilderness for fourteen days ---and from pride and naughtiness of heart to go see what is doing at Scarborough---stedfastly meaning afterwards to lead a new life, and strengthen my faith.---Now some folk say there is much company there---and some say not---and I believe there is neither the one nor the other---but will be both, if the world will have but a month's patience or so.---No, my dear H——, I did not delay sending your letter directly to the post.---As there are critical times, or rather turns and revolutions in *** humours, I knew not what the delay of an hour might hazard---I will answer for him, he has seventy times seven forgiven you---and as often wished you at the d---l.---After many oscillations the pendulum will rest firm as ever.——

I send all kind compliments to Sir C. D—— and G——s. I love them from my soul.---If G——t is with you, him also.---I go on, not rapidly, but well enough, with my uncle Toby's amours ---There is no sitting, and cudgelling one's brains whilst the sun shines bright ---'twill be all over in six or seven weeks, and there are dismal months enow after to endure suffocation by a brimstone fire-side.---If you can get to Scarborough, do.---A man who makes six tons of alum a week, may do any thing---Lord Granby is to be there——what a temptation! Yours affectionately, &c.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. Foley, at Paris.

My dear Friend, York, Sept. 29, 1754.

I HAVING just had the honour of a letter from Miss Tuting, full of the acknowledgments of your attention and kind services to her; I will not believe these arose from the D. of A———'s letters nor mine. Surely she needed no recommendation——the truest and most honest compliment I can pay you, is to say they came from your own good heart, only you was introduced to the object—for the rest followed in course—However, let me cast in my mite of thanks to the treasury which belongs to good-natured actions. I have been with Lord G——y these three weeks at Scarborough—the pleasures of which I found somewhat more exalted than those of Bagnieres last year.—I am now returned to my philosophical hut to finish Tristram, which I calculate will be ready for the world about Christmas, at which time I decamp from hence, and fix my head-quarters at London for the winter—unless my cough pushes me forwards to your metropolis—or that I can persuade some *gros* my Lord to take a trip to you—I'll try if I can make him relish the joys of the *Tuilleries, Opera Comique,* &c.

I had this week a letter from Mrs. Sterne from Montauban, in which she tells me she has occasion for fifty pounds immediately—Will you send an order to your correspondent at Montauban to pay her so much cash?—and I will in three weeks send as much to Becket—But as her purse is low, for God's sake write directly.—Now you must do something equally essential—to rectify a mistake in the mind of your correspondent there, who it seems gave her a hint not long ago, "that she was separated from me "for life."—Now as this is not true in the first place, and may give a disadvantageous impression of her to those she lives amongst——'twould be unmerciful to let her, or my daughter, suffer by it; so do be so good as to undeceive him—for in a year or two she proposes (and indeed I expect it with impatience from her) to rejoin me—and tell them I have all the confidence in the world she will not spend more than I can afford, and I only mentioned two hundred guineas a year—because 'twas right to name some certain sum, for which I begged you to give her credit.—I write to you all of my most intimate concerns, as to a brother; so excuse me, dear Foley. God bless you.—Believe me, yours affectionately.

Compliments to Mr. Panchaud, d'Holbach, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. Sterne to David Garrick, Esq.

Bath, April 6, 1765.

I SCALP you!—my dear Garrick! my dear friend!—foul befal the man who hurts a hair of your head!—and so full was I of that very sentiment, that my letter had not been put into the post office ten minutes, before my heart smote me; and I sent to recall it—but failed—You are sadly to blame, Shandy! for this, quoth I, leaning with my head on my hand, as I recriminated upon my false delicacy in the affair—Garrick's nerves (if he has any left) are as fine and delicately spun as thy own—his sentiments as honest and friendly—thou knowest, Shandy, that he loves thee—why wilt thou hazard him a moment's pain? Puppy! fool, coxcomb, jack-ass, &c. &c.—and so I balanced the account to your favour, before I received it drawn up in your way—I say your way—for it is not stated so much to your honour and credit, as I had passed the account before—for it was a most lamented truth, that I never received one of the letters your friendship meant me, except whilst in Paris.—O! how I congratulate you for the anxiety the world has, and continues to be under, for your return.—Return, return to the few who love you, and the thousands who admire you.—The moment you set your foot upon your stage—mark! I tell it you—by some magic, irresisted power, every fibre about your heart will vibrate afresh, and as strong and feelingly as ever.—Nature, with Glory at her back, will light up the torch within you—and there is enough of it left, to heat and enlighten the world these many, many, many years.

Heaven be praised! (I utter it from my soul), that your lady, and my Minerva, is in a condition to walk to Windsor —fu'!

—full rapturously will I lead the graceful pilgrim to the temple, where I will sacrifice with the purest incense to her—but you may worship with me, or not—'twill make no difference either in the truth or warmth of my devotion—still (after all I have seen) I still maintain her peerless.

Powel! good Heaven!—give me some one with less smoke and more fire—There are who, like the Pharisees, still think they shall be heard for *much* speaking—Come—come away, my dear Garrick, and teach us another lesson.

Adieu!—I love you dearly—and your lady better—not hobbihorsically—but most sentimentally and affectionately—for I am yours (that is, if you never say another word about ——) with all the sentiments of love and friendship you deserve from me.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. W.

Coxwould, May 23, 1765.

At this moment I am sitting in my summer-house with my head and heart full, not of my uncle Toby's amours with the widow Wadman, but my sermons—and your letter has drawn me out of a pensive mood—the spirit of it pleaseth me—but in this solitude, what can I tell or write to you but about myself?—I am glad that you are in love—'twill cure you at least of the spleen, which has a bad effect on both man and woman—I myself must ever have some Dulcinea in my head—it harmonizes the soul—and in those cases I first endeavour to make the lady believe so, or rather I begin first to make myself believe that I am in love—but I carry on my affairs quite in the French way, sentimentally—"*l'amour*" (say they) "*n'est rien sans* "*sentiment*"——Now, notwithstanding they make such a pother about the word, they have no precise idea annexed to it—And so much for the same subject called love.—I must tell you how I have just treated a French gentleman of fortune in France, who took a liking to my daughter—Without any ceremony (having got my direction from my wife's banker) he wrote me word that he was in love with my daughter, and desired to know what *fortune* I would give her at present, and how much at my *death*—by the bye, I think there was very little *sentiment* on *his side*—My answer was, "Sir, I shall give "her ten thousand pounds the day of "marriage—my calculation is as fol-"lows—she is not eighteen, you are six-"ty-two——there goes five thousand "pounds—then, Sir, you at least think "her not ugly—she has many accom-"plishments, speaks Italian, French, "plays upon the guittar, and as I fear "you play upon no instrument whatever, "I think you will be happy to take her "at my terms, for here finishes the ac-"count of the ten thousand pounds."—I do not suppose but he will take this as I mean—that is, a flat refusal.—I have had a parsonage-house burnt down by the carelessness of my curate's wife—as soon as I can I must rebuild it, I trow—but I lack the means at present—yet I am never happier than when I have not a shilling in my pocket—for when I have I can never call it my own. Adieu, my dear friend—may you enjoy better health than me, tho' not better spirits, for that is impossible. Yours sincerely.

My compliments to the Col.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

My dear Girl, Naples, Feb. 3, 1766.

Your letter, my Lydia, has made me both laugh and cry.—Sorry am I that you are both so afflicted with the ague, and by all means I wish you both to fly from Tours, because I remember it is situated between two rivers, la Loire and le Cher—which must occasion fogs, and damp unwholesome weather—therefore for the same reason go not to Bourges en Bresse—'tis as vile a place for agues.—I find myself infinitely better than I was—and hope to have added at least ten years to my life by this journey to Italy—the climate is heavenly, and I find new principles of health in me, which I have been long a stranger to—— but trust me, my Lydia, I will find you out, wherever you are, in May. Therefore I beg you to direct to me at Belloni's at Rome, that I may have some idea where you will be then.—The account you give me of Mrs. C—— is truly amiable, I shall ever honour her—Mr. C. is a diverting companion—what he said of your little French admirer was truly droll—the Marquis de —— is an impostor, and not worthy of your acquaintance—he only

only pretended to know me, to get introduced to your mother---I desire you will get your mother to write to Mr. C. that I may discharge every debt, and then my Lydia, if I live, the produce of my pen shall be yours---If fate reserves me not that---the humane and good, part for thy father's sake, part for thy own, will never abandon thee!---If your mother's health will permit her to return with me to England, your summers I will render as agreeable as I can at Coxwould---your winters at York---you know my publications call me to London. If Mr. and Mrs. C--- are still at Tours, thank them from me for their cordiality to my wife and daughter. I have purchased you some little trifles, which I shall give you when we meet, as proofs of affection from your fond father.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Sterne to J---H---S---, Esq.

My dear H. Naples, February 5, 1766.

'Tis an age since I have heard from you---but as I read the London Chronicle, and find no tidings of your death; or that you are even at the point of it, I take it, as I wish it, that you have got over thus much of the winter free from the damps, both of climate and spirits; and here I am, as happy as a king after all, growing fat, sleek, and well liking---not improving in stature, but in breadth.---We have a jolly carnival of it---nothing but operas---punchinelloes---festinos and masquerades---We (that is, *nous autres)* are all dressing out for one this night at the Princess Francavivalla, which is to be superb.---The English dine with her (exclusive)---and so much for small chat---except that I saw a little comedy acted last week with more expression and spirit, and true character, than I shall see one hastily again.---I stay here till the holy week, which I shall pass at Rome, where I occupy myself a month ---My plan was to have gone from thence for a fortnight to Florence---and then by Leghorn to Marseilles directly home---but am diverted from this by the repeated proposals of accompanying a gentleman, who is returning by Venice, Vienna, Saxony, Berlin, and so by the Spaw, and thence through Holland to England ---'tis with Mr. E. I have known him these three years, and have been with him ever since I reached Rome; and as I know him to be a good-hearted young gentleman, I have no doubt of making it answer both his views and mine---at least I am persuaded we shall return home together, as we set out, with friendship and good-will.---Write your next letter to me at Rome, and do me the following favour if it lies in your way, which I think it does---to get me a letter of recommendation to our Ambassador (Lord Stormont) at Vienna. I have not the honour to be known to his Lordship, but Lords P—— or H——, or twenty you better know, would write a certificate for me, importing, that I am not fallen out of the clouds. If this will cost my cousin little trouble, do inclose it in your next letter to me at Belloni.---You have left Skelton I trow a month, and I fear have had a most sharp winter, if one may judge of it from the severity of the weather here, and all over Italy, which exceeded any thing known till within these three weeks, that the sun has been as hot as we could bear it.---Give my kind services to my friends---especially to the household of faith---my dear Garland---to Gilbert---to the worthy Colonel---to Cardinal S——, to my fellow-labourer Pantagruel---Dear cousin Anthony, receive my kindest love and wishes. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXX.

From the same to the same.

Dear Anthony, May 25, near Dijon, 1766.

My desire of seeing both my wife and girl has turned me out of my road towards a delicious chateau of the Countess of M———, where I have been patriarching it these seven days with her ladyship, and half a dozen of very handsome and agreeable ladies---her ladyship has the best of hearts---a valuable present not given to every one. To-morrow, with regret, I shall quit this agreeable circle, and post it night and day to Paris, where I shall arrive in two days, and just wind myself up, when I am there, enough to roll on to Calais---so I hope to sup with you the king's birth-day, according to a plan of sixteen days standing.---Never man has been such a wildgoose chase after a wife as I have been---after having sought her in five or six different towns, I found her at last in *Franche Comté*---Poor woman! she was very cordial, &c. and

and begs to stay another year or so—my Lydia pleases me much—I found her greatly improved in every thing I wished her—I am most unaccountably well, and most accountably nonsensical——'tis at least a proof of good spirits, which is a sign and token given me in these latter days, that I must take up again the pen—In faith, I think I shall die with it in my hand, but I shall live these ten years, my Antony, notwithstanding the fears of my wife, whom I left most melancholy on that account. This is a delicious part of the world; most celestial weather, and we lie all day, without damps, upon the grass—and that is the whole of it, except the inner man (for her ladyship is not stingy of her wine) is inspired twice a day with the best Burgundy that grows upon the mountains which terminate our lands here.—Surely you will not have decamped to Crazy Castle, before I reach town.—The summer here is set in in good earnest—'tis more than we can say for Yorkshire—I hope to hear a good tale of your alum-works—have you no other works in hand? I do not expect to hear from you, so God prosper you—and all your undertakings.——I am, my dear cousin, most affectionately yours.

Remember me to Mr. G——, Cardinal S——, the Col. &c. &c. &c.

LETTER XXXI.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. Sterne.

Reverend Sir, [1766.]

It would be an insult on your humanity (or perhaps look like it) to apologize for the liberty I am taking—I am one of those people whom the vulgar and illiberal call negroes—The first part of my life was rather unlucky, as I was placed in a family who judged ignorance the best and only security for obedience.—A little reading and writing I got by unwearied application. The latter part of my life has been, through God's blessing, truly fortunate---having spent it in the service of one of the best and greatest families in the kingdom---my chief pleasure has been books---Philanthropy I adore---How very much, good Sir, am I (amongst millions) indebted to you for the character of your amiable uncle Toby!---I declare I would walk ten miles in the dog-days, to shake hands with the honest Corporal.---Your sermons have touched me to the heart, and I hope I have amended it, which brings me to the point.---In your tenth discourse, is this very affecting passage--- "Consider how great a part of our spe- "cies in all ages down to this---have been "trod under the feet of cruel and capri- "cious tyrants, who would neither hear "their cries, nor pity their distresses.--- "Consider slavery---what it is---how bit- "ter a draught---and how many millions "are made to drink of it."---Of all my favourite authors, not one has drawn a tear in favour of my miserable black brethren ---excepting yourself, and the humane author of Sir Geo. Ellison.---I think you will forgive me; I am sure you will applaud me for beseeching you to give one half-hour's attention to slavery, as it is this day practised in our West Indies.---That subject handled in your striking manner would ease the yoke (perhaps) of many---but if only of one---gracious God! what a feast to a benevolent heart! and sure I am, you are an epicurean in acts of charity.---You who are universally read, and as universally admired---you could not fail.---Dear Sir, think in me you behold the uplifted hands of thousands of my brother Moors. Grief (you pathetically observe) is eloquent: figure to yourself their attitudes; hear their supplicating addresses!---alas! you cannot refuse.---Humanity must comply ---in which hope I beg submission to subscribe myself, Reverend Sir, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. Sterne to Ignatius Sancho.

Coxwould, July 27, 1766.

There is a strange coincidence, Sancho, in the little events (as well as in the great ones) of this world: for I had been writing a tender tale of the sorrows of a friendless poor negro-girl, and my eyes had scarce done smarting with it, when your letter of recommendation, in behalf of so many of her brethren and sisters, came to me---but why her brethren, or yours, Sancho! any more than mine? It is by the finest tints, and most insensible gradations, that nature descends from the fairest face about St. James's, to the sootiest complexion in Africa:---at which tint of these is it, that the ties of blood are to cease? and how many shades must

must we descend lower still in the scale, ere mercy is to vanish with them? But 'tis no uncommon thing, my good Sancho, for one half of the world to use the other half of it like brutes, and then endeavour to make 'em so.—For my own part, I never look westward (when I am in a pensive mood at least) but I think of the burthens which our brothers and sisters are there carrying, and could I ease their shoulders from one ounce of them, I declare I would set out this hour upon a pilgrimage to Mecca for their sakes—which, by the bye, Sancho, exceeds your walk of ten miles in about the same proportion that a visit of humanity should one of mere form.—However, if you meant my uncle Toby, more he is your debtor.—If I can weave the tale I have wrote into the work I am about—'tis at the service of the afflicted—and a much greater matter; for in serious truth, it casts a sad shade upon the world, that so great a part of it are, and have been so long bound in chains of darkness, and in chains of misery; and I cannot but both respect and felicitate you, that by so much laudable diligence you have broke the one—and that by falling into the hands of so good and merciful a family, Providence has rescued you from the other.

And so, good-hearted Sancho, adieu! and believe me I will not forget your letter. Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. W.

Coxwould, December 22, 1766.

THANKS, my dear W., for your letter—I am just preparing to come and greet you and many other friends in town—I have drained my ink-standish to the bottom, and after I have published, shall set my face, not towards Jerusalem, but towards the Alps—I find I must once more fly from death whilst I have strength—I shall go to Naples, and see whether the air of that place will not set this poor frame to rights—As to the project of getting a bear to lead, I think I have enough to do to govern myself—and however profitable it might be (according to your opinion), I am sure it would be unpleasurable—Few are the minutes of life, and I do not think that I have any to throw away on any one being.—I shall spend nine or ten months in Italy, and call upon my wife and daughter in France at my return—so shall be back by the King's birth-day—what a project!—and now, my dear friend, am I going to York, not for the sake of society—nor to walk by the side of the muddy Ouse, but to recruit myself of the most violent spitting of blood that ever mortal man experienced; because I had rather (in case 'tis ordained so) die there, than in a post-chaise on the road.—If the amour of my uncle Toby do not please you, I am mistaken—and so with a droll story I will finish this letter—A sensible friend of mine, with whom, not long ago, I spent some hours in conversation, met an apothecary (an acquaintance of ours)—the latter asked him how he did? why, ill, very ill—I have been with Sterne, who has given me such a dose of Attic salt that I am in a fever—Attic salt, Sir, Attic salt! I have Glauber salt,—I have Epsom salt in my shop, &c.—Oh! I suppose 'tis some French salt—I wonder you would trust his report of the medicine, he cares not what he takes himself.—I fancy I see you smile—I long to be able to be in London, and embrace my friends there—and shall enjoy myself a week or ten days at Paris with my friends, particularly the Baron d'Holbach, and the rest of the joyous set.—As to the females—no, I will not say a word about them—only I have borrowed characters taken up (as a woman does her shift) for the purpose she intends to effectuate. Adieu, adieu—I am yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

Old Bond-street, Feb. 23, 1767.

AND so, my Lydia! thy mother and thyself are returning back again from Marseilles to the banks of the Sorgue—and there thou wilt sit and fish for trouts—I envy you the sweet situation.—Petrarch's tomb I should like to pay a sentimental visit to———the Fountain of Vaucluse, by thy description, must be delightful—I am also much pleased with the account you give of the Abbé de Sade—you find great comfort in such a neighbour—I am glad he is so good as to correct thy translation of my Sermons—dear girl, go on, and make me a present of thy work—but why not the House of Mourning? 'tis one of the best. I long to receive the life of Petrarch, and his Laura, by your Abbé; but I am out of

of all patience with the answer the Marquis made the Abbé—'twas truly coarse, and I wonder he bore it with any christian patience—but to the subject of your letter—I do not wish to know who was the busy fool, who made your mother uneasy about Mrs.———; 'tis true I have a friendship for her, but not to infatuation—I believe I have judgment enough to discern her's, and every woman's faults. I honour thy mother for her answer—" that she wished not to be " informed, and begged him to drop the " subject."—Why do you say that your mother wants money?---whilst I have a shilling, shall you not both have ninepence out of it?---I think, if I have my enjoyments, I ought not to grudge you yours.---I shall not begin my Sentimental Journey till I get to Coxwould----I have laid a plan for something new, quite out of the beaten track.---I wish I had you with me---and I would introduce you to one of the most amiable and gentlest of beings, whom I have just been with---not Mrs. ——, but a Mrs. J. the wife of as worthy a man as I ever met with---I esteem them both.---He possesses every manly virtue---honour and bravery are his characteristics, which have distinguished him nobly in several instances---I shall make you better acquainted with his character, by sending Orme's History, with the books you desired---and it is well worth your reading; for Orme is an elegant writer, and a just one; he pays no man a compliment at the expence of truth.---Mrs. J—— is kind---and friendly---of a sentimental turn of mind---and so sweet a disposition, that she is too good for the world she lives in---Just God! if all were like her, what a life would this be!---Heaven, my Lydia, for some wise purpose has created different beings---I wish my dear child knew her---thou art worthy of her friendship, and she already loves thee; for I sometimes tell her what I feel for thee. --This is a long letter---write soon, and never let your letters be studied ones---write naturally, and then you will write well.---I hope your mother has got quite well of her ague---I have sent some of Huxham's tincture of the bark. I will order you a guittar, since the other is broke. Believe me, my Lydia, that I am yours affectionately.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

Bond-street, April 9, 1767.

THIS letter, my dear Lydia, will distress thy good heart, for from the beginning thou wilt perceive no entertaining strokes of humour in it---I cannot be cheerful when a thousand melancholy ideas surround me---I have met with a loss of near fifty pounds, which I was taken in for in an extraordinary manner---but what is that loss in comparison of one I may experience?---Friendship is the balm and cordial of life, and without it, 'tis a heavy load not worth sustaining.---I am unhappy---thy mother and thyself at a distance from me, and what can compensate for such a destitution?---For God's sake, persuade her to come and fix in England, for life is too short to waste in separation---and whilst she lives in one country, and I in another, many people will suppose it proceeds from choice---besides, I want thee near me, thou child and darling of my heart! ---I am in a melancholy mood, and my Lydia's eyes will smart with weeping, when I tell her the cause that now affects me.---I am apprehensive the dear friend I mentioned in my last letter is going into a decline---I was with her two days ago, and I never beheld a being so altered---she has a tender frame, and looks like a drooping lily, for the roses are fled from her cheeks---I can never see or talk to this incomparable woman, without bursting into tears---I have a thousand obligations to her, and I owe her more than her whole sex, if not all the world put together---She has a delicacy in her way of thinking that few possess---our conversations are of the most interesting nature, and she talks to me of quitting this world with more composure than others think of living in it.---I have wrote an epitaph, of which I send thee a copy.---'Tis expressive of her modest worth---but may Heaven restore her! and may she live to write mine!

Columns and labour'd urns but vainly shew
An idle scene of decorated woe.
The sweet companion and the friend sincere,
Need no mechanic help to force the tear.
In heartfelt numbers, never meant to shine,
'Twill flow eternal o'er a hearse like thine.
'Twill flow whilst gentle goodness has one friend,
Or kindred tempers have a tear to lend.

Say all that is kind of me to thy mother,

ther, and believe me, my Lydia, that I love thee most truly---So adieu---I am what I ever was, and hope ever shall be, thy affectionate father.

As to Mr. ——, by your description he is a fat fool. I beg you will not give up your time to such a being-- Send me some *batons pour les dents*--there are none good here.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J.

Old Bond-street, April 21, 1767.

I AM sincerely affected, my dear Mr. and Mrs. J——, by your friendly inquiry, and the interest you are so good to take in my health. God knows I am not able to give a good account of myself, having passed a bad night in much feverish agitation. My physician ordered me to bed, and to keep therein till some favourable change---I fell ill the moment I got to my lodgings---he says it is owing to my taking James's Powder, and venturing out on so cold a day as Sunday---but he is mistaken, for I am certain whatever bears the name must have efficacy with me---I was bled yesterday; and again to day, and have been almost dead; but this friendly inquiry from Gerard-street has poured balm into what blood I have left---I hope still (and next to the sense of what I owe my friends), it shall be the last pleasurable sensation I will part with---if I continue mending, it will yet be some time before I shall have strength enough to get out in a carriage---my first visit will be a visit of true gratitude---I leave my kind friends to guess where---a thousand blessings go along with this, and may Heaven preserve you both---Adieu, my dear Sir, and dear lady.

I am your ever obliged, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. Sterne to Ignatius Sancho.

Bond-street, Saturday, April 25, 1767.

I WAS very sorry, my good Sancho, that I was not at home to return my compliments by you for the great courtesy of the Duke of M—g—'s family to me, in honouring my list of subscribers with their names—for which I bear them all thanks. —But you have something to add, Sancho, to what I owe your good will also on this account, and that is, to send me the subscription money, which I find a necessity of dunning my best friends for before I leave town—to avoid the perplexities of both keeping pecuniary accounts (for which I have very slender talents), and collecting them (for which I have neither strength of body or mind); and so, good Sancho, dun the Duke of M. the Duchess of M. and Lord M. for their subscriptions, and lay the sin, and money with it too, at my door—I wish so good a family every blessing they merit, along with my humblest compliments. You know, Sancho, that I am your friend and well-wisher.

P. S. I leave town on Friday morning —and should on Thursday, but that I stay to dine with Lord and Lady S——.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. Sterne to J. D——n, Esq.

Old Bond-street, Friday morning.

I WAS going, my dear D—n, to bed before I received your kind inquiry, and now my chaise stands at my door to take and convey this poor body to its legal settlement—I am ill, very ill—I languish most affectingly—I am sick both in soul and body—it is a cordial to me to hear it is different with you—no man interests himself more in your happiness, and I am glad you are in so fair a road to it—enjoy it long, my D. whilst I—no matter what—but my feelings are too nice for the world I live in—things will mend.—I dined yesterday with Lord and Lady S——; we talked much of you, and your goings on, for every one knows why Sunbury Hill is so pleasant a situation.—You rogue! you have locked up my boots—and I go bootless home, and I fear I shall go bootless all my life—Adieu, gentlest and best of souls---adieu, I am your's most affectionately.

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. Sterne to J— H— S—, Esq.

My dear Cousin, Newark, Monday ten o'clock in the morn.

I HAVE got conveyed thus far like a bale of cadaverous goods consigned to Pluto and company—lying in the bottom of my chaise most of the route, upon a large pillow which I had the *prevoyance* to purchase before I set out—I am worn out—

but press on to Barnby Moor to-night, and if possible to York the next.---I know not what is the matter with me---but some *derangement* presses hard upon this machine---still I think it will not be overset this bout.---My love to G --We shall all meet from the east, and from the south, and (as at the last) be happy together-- My kind respects to a few---I am, dear H. truly yours.

LETTER XL.

Mr. Sterne to A. L——e, Esq.

Dear L---e, Coxwould, June 7, 1767.

I had not been many days at this peaceful cottage before your letter greeted me with the seal of friendship, and most cordially do I thank you for so kind a proof of your good will---I was truly anxious to hear of the recovery of my sentimental friend---but I would not write to inquire after her, unless I could have sent her the testimony without the tax, for even how d'yes to invalids, or those who have lately been so, either call to mind what is past or what may return ---at least I find it so. I am as happy as a prince, at Coxwould——and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live ---'tis a land of plenty; I sit down alone to venison, fish, wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds, and strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley (under Hamilton Hills) can produce---with a clean cloth on my table---and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard---and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me. If solitude would cure a love-sick heart, I would give you an invitation---but absence and time lessen no attachment which virtue inspires. I am in high spirits---care never enters this cottage---I take the air every day in my post chaise, with two long-tailed horses——they turn out good ones; and as to myself, I think I am better upon the whole for the medicines and regimen I submitted to in town---May you, dear L——, want neither the one, nor the other! Yours truly.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. Sterne to Ignatius Sancho.

Coxwould, June 30, 1767.

I must acknowledge the courtesy of my good friend Sancho's letter, were I ten times burier than I am, and must thank him too for the many expressions of his good will, and good opinion--'Tis all flirtation to say a man is not gratified with being praised---we only want it to be sincere---and then it will be taken, Sancho, as kindly as yours. I left town very poorly---and with an idea I was taking leave of it for ever---but good air, a quiet retreat, and quiet reflections along with it, with an ass to milk, and another to ride upon (if I choose it), all together do wonders I shall live this year at least, I hope, be it but to give the world, before I quit it, as good impressions of me, as you have, Sancho. I would only covenant for just so much health and spirits, as are sufficient to carry my pen through the task I have set it this summer. But I am a resigned being, Sancho, and take health and sickness, as I do light and darkness, or the vicissitudes of seasons---that is, just as it pleases God to send them ---and accommodate myself to their periodical returns, as well as I can --only taking care, whatever befals me in this silly world---not to lose my temper at it. ---This I believe, friend Sancho, to be the truest philosophy---for this we must be indebted to ourselves, but not to our fortunes. Farewell---I hope you will not forget your custom of giving me a call at my lodgings next winter---in the mean time, I am very cordially, my honest friend Sancho, yours.

LETTER XLII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J.

Coxwould, July 6, 1767.

It is with as much true gratitude as ever heart felt, that I sit down to thank my dear friends Mr. and Mrs J—— for the continuation of their attention to me; but for this last instance of their humanity and politeness to me, I must ever be their debtor---I never can thank you enough, my dear friends, and yet I thank you from my soul,---and for the single day's happiness your goodness would have sent me, I wish I could send you back thousands

sands---I cannot, but they will come of themselves---and so God bless you. I have had twenty times my pen in my hand since I came down, to write a letter to you both in Gerard-street—but I am a shy kind of a soul at the bottom, and have a jealousy about troubling my friends, especially about myself. I am now got perfectly well, but was, a month after my arrival in the country, in but a poor state---my body has got the start, and is at present more at ease than my mind---but this world is a school of trials, and so Heaven's will be done! I hope you have both enjoyed all that I have wanted ---and to complete your joy, that your little lady flourishes like a vine at your table, to which I hope to see her preferred by next winter. I am now beginning to be truly busy at my Sentimental Journey---the pains and sorrows of this life having retarded its progress---but I shall make up my lee-way, and overtake every body in a very short time.

What can I send you that Yorkshire produces? tell me---I want to be of use to you, for I am, my dear friends, with the truest value and esteem, your ever obliged, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

From the same to the same.

Coxwould, August 2, 1767.

My dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J—— are infinitely kind to me, in sending now and then a letter to inquire after me ---and to acquaint me how they are. You cannot conceive, my dear lady, how truly I bear a part in your illness. I wish Mr. J—— would carry you to the south of France in pursuit of health---but why need I wish it, when I know his affection will make him do that and ten times as much to prevent a return of those symptoms which alarmed him so much in the spring? Your politeness and humanity are always contriving to treat me agreeably, and what you promise next winter, will be perfectly so---but you must get well---and your little dear girl must be of the party, with her parents and friends, to give it a relish---I am sure you shew no partiality, but what is natural and praiseworthy, in behalf of your daughter; but I wonder my friends will not find her a play-fellow; and I both hope and advise them not to venture along through this warfare of life without two strings at least to their bow. I had letters from France by last night's post, by which (by some fatality) I find not one of my letters has reached Mrs. Sterne. This gives me concern, as it wears the aspect of unkindness, which she by no means merits from me. My wife and dear girl are coming to pay me a visit for a few months; I wish I may prevail with them to tarry longer. You must permit me, dear Mrs. J., to make my Lydia known to you, if I can prevail with my wife to come and spend a little time in London, as she returns to France. I expect a small parcel ---may I trouble you, before you write next, to send to my lodgings to ask if there is any thing directed to me that you can inclose under cover? I have but one excuse for this freedom, which I am prompted to use, from a persuasion that it is doing you pleasure to give you an opportunity of doing an obliging thing---and as to myself, I rest satisfied, for 'tis only scoring up another debt of thanks to the millions I owe you both already---Receive a thousand and a thousand thanks, yes and with them ten thousand friendly wishes for all you wish in this world---May my friend Mr. J. continue blessed with good health, and may his good lady get perfectly well, there being no woman's health or comfort I so ardently pray for. Adieu, my dear friends---believe me most truly and faithfully yours.

LETTER XLIV.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

Coxwould, August 24, 1767.

I am truly surprised, my dear Lydia, that my last letter has not reached thy mother, and thyself---it looks most unkind on my part, after your having wrote me word of your mother's intention of coming to England, that she has not received my letter to welcome you both---and though in that I said I wished you would defer your journey till March, for before that time I should have published my sentimental work, and should be in town to receive you---yet I will shew you more real politeness than any you have met with in France, as mine will come warm from the heart. I am sorry you are not here at the races, but *les fêtes champêtres* of the Marquis de Sade have made you amends. I know B—— very

well, and he is what in France would be called admirable—that would be but so so here—You are right—he studies nature more than any, or rather most, of the French comedians---If the Empress of Russia pays him and his wife a pension of twenty thousand livres a year, I think he is very well off. The toliy of staying till after twelve for supper---that you two excommunicated beings might have meat !---" his conscience would not let it " be served before." Surely the Marquis thought you both, being English, could not be satisfied without it I would have given, not my gown and cassock (for I have but one), but my topaz ring, to have seen the *petits maitres et maitresses* go to mass, after having spent the night in dancing. As to my pleasures, they are few in compass. My poor cat sits purring beside me---your lively French dog shall have his place on the other side of my fire---but if he is as devilish as when I last saw him, I must tutor him, for I will not have my cat abused---in short, I will have nothing devilish about me---a combustion will spoil a sentimental thought.

Another thing I must desire---do not be alarmed---'tis to throw all your rouge pots into the Sorgue before you set out---I will have no rouge put on in England---and do not bewail them as —— —— did her silver feringue or glister equipage which she lost in a certain river---but take a wise resolution of doing without rouge. ---I have been three days ago bad again ---with a spitting of blood---and that unfeeling brute ******* came and drew my curtains, and with a voice like a trumpet, halloo'd in my ear---Z---ds, what a fine kettle of fish have you brought yourself to, Mr. S——! In a faint voice, I bad him leave me, for comfort sure was never administered in so rough a manner. ---Tell your mother I hope she will purchase what either of you may want at Paris---'tis an occasion not to be lost---so write to me from Paris that I may come and meet you in my post-chaise with my long-tailed horses---and the moment you have both put your feet in it, call it hereafter yours.---Adieu, dear Lydia---believe me, what I ever shall be, your affectionate father.

I think I shall not write to Avignon any more, but you will find one for you at Paris---once more adieu.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Sterne to Sir W.

Dear Sir, Coxwould, Sept. 27, 1767.

You are arrived at Scarborough when all the world has left it---but you are an unaccountable being, and so there is nothing more to be said on the matter---You wish me to come to Scarborough, and join you to read a work that is not yet finished---besides, I have other things in my head.---My wife will be here in three or four days, and I must not be found straying in the wilderness---but I have been there. As for meeting you at Bluit's, with all my heart---I will laugh, and drink my barley-water with you. As soon as I have greeted my wife and daughter, and hired them a house at York, I shall go to London, where you generally are in spring---and then my Sentimental Journey will, I dare say, convince you that my feelings are from the heart, and that that heart is not of the worst of moulds---praised be God for my sensibility ! Though it has often made me wretched, yet I would not exchange it for all the pleasures the grossest sensualist ever felt. Write to me the day you will be at York---'tis ten to one but I may introduce you to my wife and daughter. Believe me, my good Sir, ever yours.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J——.

Coxwould, October 3, 1767.

I have suffered under a strong desire for above this fortnight, to send a letter of inquiries after the health and the well-being of my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. J—— ; and I do assure you both, 'twas merely owing to a little modesty in my temper not to make my good-will troublesome, where I have so much, and to those I never think of, but with ideas of sensibility and obligation, that I have refrain'd.---Good God ! to think I could be in town, and not go the first step I made to Gerard-street !---My mind and body must be at sad variance with each other, should it ever fall out that it is not both the first and last place also where I shall betake myself, were it only to say, " God bless you."---May you have every blessing he can send you ! 'tis a part of my

my litany, where you will always have a place whilst I have a tongue to repeat it. —And so you heard I had left Scarborough, which you would no more credit, than the reasons assigned for it—I thank you for it kindly—though you have not told me what they were; being a shrewd divine, I think I can guess.—I was ten days at Scarborough in September, and was hospitably entertained by one of the best of our Bishops; who, as he kept house there, pressed me to be with him——and his household consisted of a gentleman and two ladies—which, with the good Bishop and myself, made so good a party that we kept much to ourselves.—I made in this time a connexion of great friendship with my mitred host, who would gladly have taken me with him back to Ireland.—However, we all left Scarborough together, and lay fifteen miles off, where we kindly parted.——Now it was supposed (and have since heard) that I e'en went on with the party to London, and this I suppose was the reason assigned for my being there.—I dare say charity would add a little to the account, and give out that 'twas on the score of one, and perhaps both of the ladies—and I will excuse charity on that head, for a heart disengaged could not well have done better. —I have been hard writing ever since—and hope by Christmas I shall be able to give a gentle rap at your door—and tell you how happy I am to see my two good friends.—I assure you I spur on my Pegasus more violently upon that account, and am now determined not to draw bit, till I have finished this Sentimental Journey—which I hope to lay at your feet, as a small (but a very honest) testimony of the constant truth with which I am, my dear friends, your ever obliged and grateful, &c.

P. S. My wife and daughter arrived here last night from France.—My girl has returned an elegant accomplished little slut—my wife——but I hate to praise my wife—'tis as much as decency will allow to praise my daughter.—I suppose they will return next summer to France. ——They leave me in a month to reside at York for the winter—and I stay at Coxwould till the first of January.

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. F———.

Dear Madam, Coxwould, Friday.

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for your obliging inquiry after me—I got down last summer very much worn out—and much worse at the end of my journey —I was forced to call at his Grace's house (the Archbishop of York) to refresh myself a couple of days upon the road near Doncaster—Since I got home to quietness, and temperance, and good books, and good hours, I have mended —and am now very stout—and in a fortnight's time shall perhaps be as well as you yourself could wish me.—I have the pleasure to acquaint you that my wife and daughter are arrived from France.—I shall be in town to greet my friends by the first of January.—Adieu, dear Madam —Believe me yours sincerely.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J——.

Coxwould, November 12, 1767.

FORGIVE me, dear Mrs. J——, if I am troublesome in writing something betwixt a letter and a card, to inquire after you and my good friend Mr. J——, whom 'tis an age since I have heard a syllable of.——I think so, however, and never more felt the want of a house I esteem so much, as I do now when I can hear tidings of it so seldom—and have nothing to recompense my desires of seeing its kind possessors, but the hopes before me of doing it by Christmas. I long sadly to see you—and my friend Mr. J———. I am still at Coxwould—my wife and girl here. She is a dear good creature—affectionate, and most elegant in body, and mind—she is all Heaven could give me in a daughter—but like other blessings, not given, but lent; for her mother loves France—and this dear part of me must be torn from my arms, to follow her mother, who seems inclined to establish her in France, where she has had many advantageous offers.—Do not smile at my weakness, when I say I don't wonder at it, for she is as accomplished a slut as France can produce. You shall excuse all this—if you won't, I desire Mr. J——— to be my advocate—but I know

I don't want one.—With what pleasure shall I embrace your dear little pledge—whom I hope to see every hour increasing in stature, and in favour, both with God and man!—I kiss all your hands with a most devout and friendly heart.——No man can wish you more good than your meagre friend does—few so much, for I am with infinite cordiality, gratitude, and honest affection, my dear Mrs. J———, your ever faithful, &c.

P. S. My Sentimental Journey will please Mrs. J———, and my Lydia---I can answer for those two. It is a subject which works well, and suits the frame of mind I have been in for some time past—I told you my design in it was to teach us to love the world and our fellow-creatures better than we do—so it runs most upon those gentler passions and affections, which aid so much to it. Adieu, and may you and my worthy friend Mr. J—— continue examples of the doctrine I teach!

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. Sterne to A. L——e, Esq.

Coxwould, November, 19, 1767.

You make yourself unhappy, dear L——e, by imaginary ills—which you might shun, instead of putting yourself in the way of. Would not any man in his senses fly from the object he adores, and not waste his time and his health in increasing his misery by so vain a pursuit? The idol of your heart is one of ten thousand. The Duke of —— has long sighed in vain—and can you suppose a woman will listen to you that is proof against titles, stars, and red ribbands? Her heart (believe me L——e) will not be taken in by fine men, or fine speeches—If it should ever feel a preference, it will choose an object for itself, and it must be a singular character that can make an impression on such a being—she has a Platonic way of thinking, and knows love only by name—the natural reserve of her character, which you complain of, proceeds not from pride, but from a superiority of understanding, which makes her despise every man that turns himself into a fool—Take my advice, and pay your addresses to Miss ——; she esteems you, and time will wear off an attachment which has taken so deep a root in your heart. I pity you from my soul—but we are all born with passions which ebb and flow (else they would play the devil with us) to different objects—and the best advice I can give you, L——e, is to turn the tide of yours another way. I know not whether I shall write again while I stay at Coxwould. I am in earnest at my sentimental work---and intend being in town soon after Christmas—in the mean time adieu. Let me hear from you, and believe me, dear L. yours, &c.

LETTER L.

From the same to the same.

Dear L. Coxwould, December 7, 1767.

I said I would not perhaps write any more, but it would be unkind not to reply to so interesting a letter as yours—I am certain you may depend upon Lord ——'s promises,—he will take care of you in the best manner he can, and your knowledge of the world, and of languages in particular, will make you useful in any department—If his Lordship's scheme does not succeed, leave the kingdom—go to the east, or the west, for travelling would be of infinite service to both your body and mind—But more of this when we meet—now to my own affairs. I have had an offer of exchanging two pieces of preferment I hold here, for a living of three hundred and fifty pounds a year in Surry, about thirty miles from London, and retaining Coxwould, and my prebendaryship—the country also is sweet—but I will not, cannot come to any determination, till I have consulted with you and my other friends. I have great offers too in Ireland—the Bishops of C—— and R—— are both my friends—but I have rejected every proposal, unless Mrs. S—— and my Lydia could accompany me thither---I live for the sake of my girl, and, with her sweet light burthen in my arms, I could get up fast the hill of preferment, if I chose it—but without my Lydia, if a mitre was offered me, it would sit uneasy upon my brow. Mrs. S———'s health is unsupportable in England. She must return to France, and justice and humanity forbid me to oppose it. I will allow her enough to live comfortably, until she can

can rejoin me. My heart bleeds, L—e, when I think of parting with my child—'twill be like the separation of soul and body—and equal to nothing but what passes at that tremendous moment; and like it in one respect, for she will be in one kingdom, whilst I am in another. You will laugh at my weakness but I cannot help it—for she is a dear, disinterested girl—As a proof of it---when she left Coxwould, and I bade her adieu, I pulled out my purse, and offered her ten guineas for her private pleasures—her answer was pretty, and affected me too much: "No, my dear papa, our expences of coming from France may have straitened you---I would rather put an hundred guineas in your pocket than take ten out of it"—I burst into tears—but why do I practise on your feelings—by dwelling on a subject that will touch your heart?—It is too much melted already by its own sufferings, L—e, for me to add a pang, or cause a single sigh ---God bless you---I shall hope to greet you by New-year's-day in perfect health ---Adieu, my dear friend---I am most truly and cordially yours.

LETTER LI.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J.

York, December 23, 1767.

I was afraid that either Mr or Mrs. J——, or their little blossom, was drooping---or that some of you were ill, by not having the pleasure of a line from you, and was thinking of writing again to inquire after you all---when I was cast down myself with a fever, and bleeding at my lungs which had confined me to my room near three weeks---when I had the favour of yours, which till to-day I have not been able to thank you both kindly for, as I most cordially now do---as well as for all your professions and proofs of good-will to me. I will not say I have not balanced accounts with you in this All I know is, that I honour and value you more than I do any good creatures upon earth---and that I could not wish your happiness and the success of whatever conduces to it, more than I do, was I your brother---but, good God! are we not all brothers and sisters who are friendly, virtuous, and good? Surely, my dear friends, my illness has been a sort of sympathy for your afflictions upon the score of your dear little one.---I am worn down to a shadow; but as my fever has left me, I set off the latter end of next week with my friend Mr. Hall for town---I need not tell my friends in Gerard-street, I shall do myself the honour to visit them, before either Lord ——— or Lord ———, &c &c.---I thank you, my dear friend, for what you say so kindly about my daughter---it shews your good heart, for as she is a stranger, 'tis a free gift in you---but when she is known to you,---she shall win it fairly---but, alas! when this event is to happen, is in the clouds. Mrs. S--- has hired a house ready furnished at York, till she returns to France, and my Lydia must not leave her.

What a sad scratch of a letter!---but I am weak, my dear friends, both in body and mind---so God bless you---you will see me enter like a ghost---so I tell you before hand not to be frightened.---I am, my dear friends, with the truest attachment and esteem, ever yours.

LETTER LII.

From the same to the same.

Old Bond Street, January 1, 1768.

Not knowing whether the moisture of the weather will permit me to give my kind friends in Gerard-street a call this morning for five minutes---I beg leave to send them all the good wishes, compliments, and respects, I owe them. ---I continue to mend, and doubt not but this, with all other evils and uncertainties of life, will end for the best. I send all compliments to your fire-sides this Sunday night---Miss Ayscough the wise, Miss Pigot the witty, your daughter the pretty, and so on.---If Lord C—— is with you, I beg my dear Mrs. J—— will present the inclosed to him——'twill add to the millions of obligations I already owe you.---I am sorry that I am no subscriber to Soho this season---it deprives me of a pleasure worth twice the subscription——but I am just going to send about this quarter of the town, to see if it is not too late to procure a ticket, undisposed of, from some of my Soho friends; and if I can succeed, I will either send or wait upon you with it by half an hour after three to-morrow ---if not, my friend will do me the justice to believe me truly miserable---I am half

engaged, or more, for dinner on Sunday next, but will try to get disengaged, in order to be with my friends.—If I cannot I will glide like a shadow uninvited to Gerard-street some day this week, that we may eat our bread and meat in love and peace together.—God bless you both!—I am, with the most sincere regard, your ever obliged, &c.

LETTER LII.

Mr. Sterne to Mr. and Mrs. J.

Thursday, Old Bond-street.

A THOUSAND thanks, and as many excuses, my dear friends, for the trouble my blunder has given you. By a second note I am astonished I could read Saturday for Sunday, or make any mistake in a card wrote by Mrs. J——s, in which my friend is as unrivalled, as in a hundred greater excellencies.

I am now tied down neck and heels (twice over) by engagements every day this week, or most joyfully would have trod the old pleasing road from Bond to Gerard-street. My books will be to be had on Thursday, but possibly on Wednesday in the afternoon.—I am quite well, but exhausted with a room full of company every morning till dinner—How do I lament I cannot eat my morsel (which is always sweet) with such kind friends!—The Sunday following I will assuredly wait upon you both—and will come a quarter before four, that I may have both a little time and a little day light, to see Mrs. J——'s picture.—I beg leave to assure my friends of my gratitude for all their favours, with my sentimental thanks for every token of their good will.—Adieu, my dear friends—I am truly yours.

LETTER LIV.

Mr. Sterne to Miss Sterne.

February 20, Old Bond-street.

My dearest Lydia,

MY Sentimental Journey, you say, is admired in York by every one—and 'tis not vanity in me to tell you that it is no less admired here—but what is the gratification of my feelings on this occasion?—The want of health bows me down, and vanity harbours not in thy father's breast—this vile influenza—be not alarm'd I think I shall get the better of it—and shall be with you both the first of May; and if I escape, 'twill not be for a long period, my child—unless a quiet retreat and peace of mind can restore me.—The subject of thy letter has astonished me.—She could but know little of my feelings, to tell thee, that under the supposition I should survive thy mother, I should bequeath thee as a legacy to ——. No, my Lydia! 'tis a lady, whose virtues I wish thee to imitate, that I shall entrust my girl to—I mean that friend whom I have so often talked and wrote about—from her you will learn to be an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend—and you cannot be intimate with her, without her pouring some part of the milk of human kindness into your breast, which will serve to check the heat of your own temper, which you partake in a small degree of.—Nor will that amiable woman put my Lydia under the painful necessity to fly to India for protection, whilst it is in her power to grant her a more powerful one in England.—But I think, my Lydia, that thy mother will survive me—do not deject her spirits with thy apprehensions on my account.—I have sent you a necklace, buckles, and the same to your mother.—My girl cannot form a wish that is in the power of her father, that he will not gratify her in—and I cannot in justice be less kind to thy mother.—I am never alone.——The kindness of my friends is ever the same—I wish tho' I had thee to nurse me—but I am denied that.—Write to me twice a week, at least.—God bless thee, my child, and believe me ever, ever thy affectionate father.

LETTER LV.

Mr. Sterne to Mrs. J.

Tuesday.

YOUR poor friend is scarce able to write—he has been at death's door this week with a pleurisy—I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday—The physician says I am better—God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while of gaining strength.—Before I have gone thro' half this letter, I must stop to rest my weak hand above a dozen times—Mr. J—— was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him, and he overjoyed me by talking a great deal of you.

you. Do, dear Mrs. J———, entreat him to come to-morrow, or next day, for perhaps I have not many days, or hours, to live—I want to ask a favour of him, if I find myself worse—that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror—my spirits are fled—'tis a bad omen—do not weep, my dear Lady—your tears are too precious to shed for me—bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn. Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women! may health, peace, and happiness, prove your handmaids!—If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemn'd---which my heart, not my head, betrayed me into. Should my child, my Lydia, want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom?—You are the only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action. I wrote to her a fortnight ago*, and told her what I trust she will find in you. Mr. J——— will be a father to her—he will protect her from every insult, for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which he would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence—Commend me to him—as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world. Adieu—All grateful thanks to you and Mr. J———. Your poor affectionate friend.

LETTER LVI.

Mr. Sterne to **********.

——I BEHELD her tender look—her pathetic eye petrified my fluids—the liquid dissolution drowned those once-bright orbs—the late sympathetic features, so pleasing in their harmony, are now blasted—withered—and are dead;—her charms are dwindled into a melancholy which demands my pity. Yes—my friend—our once sprightly and vivacious Harriot is that very object that must thrill your soul. How abandoned is that heart which bulges the tear of innocence, and is the cause—the fatal cause of overwhelming the spotless soul, and plunging the yet-untainted mind into a sea of sorrow and repentance—Though born to protect the fair, does not man act the part of a demon?—first alluring by his temptations, and then triumphing in his victory---when villany gets the ascendency, it seldom leaves the wretch till it has thoroughly polluted him ——— T*******, once the joyous companion of our juvenile extravagancies, by a deep-laid scheme, so far ingratiated himself into the good graces of the old man---that even he, with all his penetration and experience (of which old folks generally pique themselves), could not perceive his drift, and, like the goodness of his own heart, believed him honourable:---had I known his pretensions---I would have flown on the wings of friendship---of regard---of affection---and rescued the lovely innocent from the hands of the spoiler:---be not alarmed at my declaration---I have been long bound to her in the reciprocal bonds of affection;---but it is of a more delicate stamp than the gross materials nature has planted in us for procreation---I hope ever to retain the idea of innocence, and love her still:---I would love the whole sex were they equally deserving.

——— ——— taking her by the hand---the other thrown round her waist---after an intimacy allowing such freedoms---with a look deceitfully pleasing, the villain poured out a torrent of protestations---and though oaths are sacred---swore, with all the fortitude of a conscientious man---the depth of his love---the height of his esteem---the strength of his attachment;---by these, and other artful means, to answer his abandoned purpose (for which you know he is but too well qualified)---gained on the open inexperienced heart of the generous Harriot, and robbed her of her brightest jewel. Oh, England! where are your senators?---where are your laws?---Ye Heavens! where rests your deadly thunder?---why are your bolts restrained from o'erwhelming with vengeance this vile seducer?——I,---my friend,---I,was the minister sent by justice to revenge her wrongs---revenge---I disclaim it---to redress her wrongs. The news of affliction flies---I heard it, and posted to ****, where forgetting my character---this is the style of the enthusiast---it most became my character---I saw him in his retreat---I flew out of the chaise---caught him by the collar---and in a tumult of passion---demanded:---sure, if anger is

* From this circumstance it may be conjectured, that this Letter was written on Tuesday the 8th of March, 1768, ten days before Mr. Sterne died.

is excusable, it must be when it is exerted by a detestation of vice---I demanded him to restore---alas! what was not in his power to return---Vengeance! ---and shall these vermin---these spoilers of the fair---these murderers of the mind ---lurk and creep about in dens, secure to themselves, and pillage all around them?--Distracted with my rage--I charged him with his crime--exploded his baseness---condemned his villany---while coward guilt sat on his sullen brow, and, like a criminal conscious of his deed, tremblingly pronounced his fear. He hoped means might be found for a sufficient atonement---offered a tender of his hand as a satisfaction, and a life devoted to her service as a recompense for his error. His humiliation struck me---'twas the only means he could have contrived to assuage my anger ——I hesitated---paused---thought---and still must think on so important a concern:---assist me--I am half afraid of trusting my Harriot in the hands of a man, whose character I too well know to be the antipodes of Harriot's---He all fire and dissipation;---she all meekness and sentiment! nor can I think there is any hopes of reformation; ---the offer proceeds more from surprise or fear, than justice and sincerity. The world---the world will exclaim, and my Harriot be a cast-off from society---Let her---I had rather see her thus, than miserably linked for life to a unpolite vice---She shall retire to some corner of the world, and there weep out the remainder of her days in sorrow---forgetting the wretch who has abused her confidence, but ever remembering the friend who consoles her in retirement. You, my dear Charles, shall bear a part with me in the delightful task of whispering "peace to those who are in trouble, and "healing the broken in spirit." Adieu.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. Sterne to **********.

Sir,

I FEEL the weight of obligation which your friendship has laid upon me, and if it should never be in my power to make you a recompense, I hope you will be recompensed at the "resurrection of the "just." I hope, Sir, we shall both be found in that catalogue;---and we are encouraged to hope, by the example of Abraham's faith, even "against hope." --I think there is, at least, as much probability of our reaching, and rejoicing in the "haven where we would be," as there was of the old Patriarch's having a child by his old wife. There is not any person living or dead, whom I have so strong a desire to see and converse with as yourself: indeed I have no inclination to visit, or say a syllable to but a few persons in this lower vale of vanity and tears besides you;---but I often derive a peculiar satisfaction in conversing with the ancient and modern dead,--who yet live and speak excellently in their works.--- My neighbours think me often alone,--- and yet at such times I am in company with more than five hundred mutes--- each of whom, at my pleasure, communicates his ideas to me by dumb signs--- quite as intelligibly as any person living can do by uttering of words. They always keep the distance from me which I direct,---and, with a motion of my hand, I can bring them as near to me as I please. I lay hands on fifty of them sometimes in an evening, and handle them as I like:---they never complain of ill-usage,---and when dismissed from my presence,--though ever so abruptly--- take no offence. Such convenience is not to be enjoyed--nor such liberty to be taken--with the living:---we are bound ---in point of good manners, to admit all our pretended friends when they knock for an entrance, and dispense with all the nonsense or impertinence which they broach till they think proper to withdraw: nor can we take the liberty of humbly and decently opposing their sentiments without exciting their disgust, and being in danger of their splenetic representation after they have left us.

I am weary of talking to the many, ---who though quick of hearing---are so "slow of heart to believe"---propositions which are next to self-evident;---you and I were not cast in one mould--corporal comparison will attest it,---and yet we are fashioned so much alike, that we may pass for twins:---were it possible to take an inventory of all our sentiments and feelings---just and unjust,—holy and impure---there would appear as little difference between them as there is between instinct and reason---or-- wit and madness: the barriers which separate these---

like

like the real essence of bodies—escape the piercing eye of metaphysics, and cannot be pointed out more clearly than geometricians define a strait line, which is said to have length without breadth.——O ye learned anatomical aggregates, who pretend to instruct other aggregates! be as candid as the sage whom ye pretend to revere---and tell them, that all you know is, that you know nothing!

————I have a *mort* to communicate to you on different subjects---my mountain will be in labour till I see you ---and then---what then?---why you must expect to see it bring forth---a mouse.---I therefore beseech you to have a watchful eye to the cats;---but it is said that mice were designed to be killed by cats---cats to be worried by dogs, &c. &c. This may be true---and I think I am made to be killed by my cough,---which is a perpetual plague to me; what, in the name of sound lungs, has my cough to do with you---or---you with my cough?

I am, Sir, with the most perfect affection and esteem, your humble servant, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Mr. Sterne to ****.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE received your kind letter of critical, and I will add, of parental advice, which, contrary to my natural humour, set me upon looking gravely for half a day together: sometimes I concluded you had not spoke out, but had stronger grounds for your hints and cautions than what your good-nature knew how to tell me, especially with regard to prudence, as a divine; and that you thought in your heart the vein of humour too free for the solemn colour of my coat. A meditation upon death had been a more suitable trimming to it, I own; but then it could not have been set on by me. Mr. F---, whom I regard in the class I do you, as my best of critics and well-wishers, preaches daily to me on the same text: "Get your preferment first, Lory," he says, "and then write and welcome." But suppose preferment is long a-coming ---and, for aught I know, I may not be preferred till the resurrection of the just—and am all that time in labour, how must I bear my pains? Like pious divines? or, rather, like able philosophers, knowing that one passion is only to be combated with another? But to be serious (if I can), I will use all reasonable caution,---only with this caution along with it, not to spoil my book, that is, the air and originality of it, which must resemble the author; and I fear it is the number of these slighter touches, which make the resemblance, and identify it from all others of the same stamp, which this under-strapping virtue of prudence would oblige me to strike out. A very able critic, and one of my colour too, who has read over Tristram, made answer, upon my saying I would consider the colour of my coat as I corrected it, that that idea in my head would render my book not worth a groat. Still I promise to be cautious; but deny I have gone as far as Swift: he keeps a due distance from Rabelais; I keep a due distance from him. Swift has said a hundred things I durst not say, unless I was Dean of St. Patrick's.

I like your caution, "*amlitiosa recides* "*ornamenta.*" As I revise my book, I will shrive my conscience upon that sin, and whatever ornaments are of that kind shall be defaced without mercy. Ovid is justly censured for being "*ingenii sui* "*amator*; and it is a reasonable hint to me, as I'm not sure I am clear of it. To sport too much with your wit, or the game that wit has pointed out, is surfeiting; like toying with a man's mistress, it may be very delightful solacement to the inamorato, but little to the bystander. Though I plead guilty to part of the charge, yet it would greatly alleviate the crime if my readers knew how much I have suppressed of this device. I have burnt more wit than I have published, on that very account, since I began to avoid the fault, I fear I may yet have given proofs of.---I will reconsider Slop's fall, and my too minute description of it; but, in general, I am persuaded that the happiness of the Cervantic humour arises from this very thing,---of describing silly and trifling events with the circumstantial pomp of great ones. Perhaps this is overloaded, and I can ease it. I have a project of getting Tristram put into the hands of the Archbishop, if he comes down this autumn, which will ease my mind of all trouble upon the topic of discretion. I am, &c.

LETTER LIX.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. J— W——e.

Charles-street, Feb. 14, 1768.

My worthy and much respected Friend, POPE observes,

" Men change with fortune, manners change with climes,
" Tenets with books, and principles with times."

Your friendly letter convinced me that you are still the same---and gave in that conviction a ten-fold pleasure :---you carried out (through God's grace) an honest friendly heart, a clear discerning head, and a soul impressed with every humane feeling. That you are still the same---I repeat it---gives me more joy---than the certainty would of your being worth ten jaghires :---I dare say you will ever remember that the truest worth is that of the mind---the best rectitude of the heart---the conscience unsullied with guilt---the undaunted noble eye, enriched with innocence, and shining with social glee---peace dancing in the heart---and health smiling in the face---May these be ever thy companions! and for riches you will ever be more than vulgarly rich---while you thankfully enjoy---and gratefully assist the wants (as far as you are able) of your fellow-creatures. But I think (and so will you) that I am preaching. I only meant in truth to thank you, which I most sincerely do, for your kind letter :---believe me, it gratifies a better principle than vanity---to know that you remember your dark-faced friend at such a distance. But what would have been your feelings---could you have beheld your worthy, thrice worthy father---joy sitting triumphant in his honest face---speeding from house to house, amongst his numerous friends, with the pleasing testimonials of his son's love and duty in his hands---every one congratulating him, and joining in good wishes---while the starting tear plainly proved that over-joy and grief give the same livery?

You met with an old acquaintance of mine, Mr. G———. I am glad to hear he is well; but, when I knew him, he was young, and not so *wise* as *knowing*: I hope he will take example by what he sees in you---and you, young man, remember, if you should unhappily fall into bad company, that example is only the fool's plea, and the rogue's excuse, for doing *wrong* things :---you have a turn for reflection, and a steadiness, which, aided by the best of social dispositions, must make your company much coveted, and your person loved. Forgive me for presuming to dictate, when I well know you have many friends much more able, from knowledge and better sense—though I deny—a better will.

You will of course make men and things your study—their different genius, aims, and passions :—you will also note climes, buildings, soils, and products, which will be neither tedious nor unpleasant. If you adopt the rule of writing every evening your remarks on the past day, it will be a kind of friendly *tête-a-tête* between you and yourself, wherein you may sometimes happily become your own monitor;—and hereafter those little notes will afford you a rich fund, whenever you shall be inclined to re-trace past times and places. I say nothing upon the score of religion—for, I am clear, every good affection, every sweet sensibility, every heart-felt joy—humanity, politeness, charity—all, all, are streams from that sacred spring :—so that to say you are good-tempered, honest, social, &c. &c. is only in fact saying, you live according to your Divine Master's rules, and are a Christian.

Your B— friends are all well, excepting the good Mrs. C—, who is at this time but so so. Miss C— still as agreeable as when you knew her, if not more so. Mr. R—, as usual, never so happy, never so gay, nor so much in true pleasure, as when he is doing good—he enjoys the hope of your well-doing as much as any of your family. His brother John has been lucky—his abilities, address, good nature, and good sense, have got him a surgeoncy in the battalion of guards, which is reckoned a very good thing.

As to news, what we have is so incumbered with falsehoods, I think it, as Bobadil says, " a service of danger" to meddle with: this I know for truth, that the late great Dagon of the people has totally lost all his worshippers, and walks the streets as unregarded as Ignatius Sancho, and I believe almost as poor—such is the stability of popular greatness:

" One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
" Of idle starers, or of loud huzzas," &c.

Your

Your brother and sister C—d sometimes look in upon us; her boys are fine, well, and thriving; and my honest cousin Joe increases in sense and stature; he promises to be as good as clever. He brought me your first letter, which, though first wrote, had the fate to come last; the little man came from Red-lion court to Charles-street by himself, and seemed the taller for what he had done; he is indeed a sweet boy, but I fear every body will be telling him so. I know the folly of so doing, and yet am as guilty as any one.

There is sent out in the Besborough, along with fresh governors, and other strange commodities, a little Blacky, whom you must either have seen or heard of; his name is S—. He goes out upon a rational well-digested plan, to settle either at Madras or Bengal, to teach fencing and riding—he is expert at both. If he should chance to fall in your way, do not fail to give the rattlepate what wholesome advice you can; but remember, I do strictly caution you against lending him money upon any account, for he has every thing but—principle; he will never pay you; I am sorry to say so much of one whom I have had a friendship for, but it is needful. Serve him, if you can—but do not trust him. There is in the same ship, belonging to the captain's band of music, one C— L—n, whom I think you have seen in Privy Gardens: he is honest, trusty, good-natured, and civil; if you see him, take notice of him, and I will regard it as a kindness to me. I have nothing more to say. Continue in right thinking, you will of course act well; in well doing, you will insure the favour of God, and the love of your friends, amongst whom pray reckon yours faithfully, &c.

LETTER LX.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. M——.

August 7, 1768.

LORD! what is man?—and what business have such lazy, lousy, paltry beings of a day to form friendships, or to make connexions? Man is an absurd animal—yea, I will ever maintain it—in his vices, dreadful—in his few virtues, silly—he has religion without devotion—philosophy without wisdom—the divine passion (as it is called) love too oft without affection—and anger without cause—friendship without reason—hate without reflection—knowledge (like Ashley's punch in small quantities) without judgment—and wit without discretion.—Look into old age, you will see avarice joined to poverty—lechery, gout, impotency, like three monkies, or London bucks, in a one-horse whisky, driving to the Devil.—Deep politicians with palsied heads and relaxed nerves—zealous in the great cause of national welfare and public virtue—but touch not—oh! touch not the pocket—friendship—religion—love of country—excellent topics for declamation!——but most ridiculous chimera to suffer either in money or ease—for, trust me, my M—, I am resolved upon a reform.—Truth, fair truth, I give thee to the wind!—Affection, get thee hence! Friendship, be it the idol of such silly chaps, with aching heads, strong passions, warm hearts, and happy talents, as of old used to visit Charles-street, and now abideth in fair G——h-house.

I give it under my hand and mark, that the best receipt for your aching head (if not the only thing which will relieve you) is cutting off your hair. I know it is not the *ton*; but when ease and health stand on the right—ornament and fashion on the left—it is by no means the ass between two loads of hay—why not ask counsel about it? Even the young part of the faculty were formerly obliged to submit to amputation, in order to look wise.—What they sacrificed to appearances, do thou to necessity—Absalom had saved his life, but for his hair. You will reply, "Cæsar would have been drowned, "but his length of hair afforded hold to "the friendly hand that drew him to "shore." Art, at this happy time, imitates nature so well in both sexes, that in truth our own growth is but of little consequence. Therefore, my dear M——, part with your hair and head-achs together, and let us see you spruce, well-shorn, easy, gay, debonnair—as of old.

I have made inquiry after L———'s letter. My friend R—— went to demand the reason for omitting to publish it, and to reclaim the copy. The publisher smiled at him, and bid him examine the M. C. of J. 13, where he would find L. and the same paper of the 20th instant, where he would also find P—— B——'s

very

very angry answer. Indeed the poor fellow foams again, and appears as indecently dull as malice could wish him. I went to the coffee-house to examine the file, and was greatly pleased upon the second reading of your work, in which is blended the gentleman and the scholar. Now, observe, if you dare to say I flatter, or mean to flatter you, either impeach my judgment or honesty---at your peril then be it. For your letter of yesterday, I could find in my conscience not to thank you for it---it gave a melancholy tint to every thing about me. Pope had the head-ach vilely---Spenser, I have heard, suffered much from it---in short, it is the ail of true geniuses. They applied a thick wreath of laurel round their brows---do you the same---and putting the best foot foremost---duly considering the mansion---what it had suffered through chance, time, and hard use---be thankfully resigned, humble, and say, "It is well it is no worse!"

I do not wish you to be any other than nice in what new acquaintance you make. As to friendship, it is a mistake---real friendships are not hastily made---friendship is a plant of slow growth, and, like our English oak, spreads---is more majestically beautiful, and increases in shade, strength, and riches, as it increases in years. I pity your poor head, for this confounded scrawl of mine is enough to give the head-ach to the strongest brain in the kingdom---so remember I quit the pen unwillingly, having not said half what I meant; but, impelled by conscience, and a due consideration of your ease, I conclude, just wishing you as well as I do my dear self, yours, &c.

Your cure in four words, is
CUT---OFF---YOUR---HAIR.

LETTER LXI.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. M——.

Sept. 20, 1768.

OH my M——, what a feast! to a mind fashioned as thine is to gentle deeds! ---Could'st thou have beheld the woeworn object of thy charitable care, receive the noble donation of thy blest house!---the lip quivering, and the tongue refusing its office, through joyful surprize ---the heart gratefully throbbing---overswelled with thankful sensations---I could behold a field of battle, and survey the devastations of the Devil, without a tear---but a heart o'ercharged with gratitude, or a deed begotten by sacred pity ---as thine of this day---would melt me, although unused to the melting mood. As to thy noble, truly noble, Miss ——, I say nothing---she serves a master---who can and will reward her as ample---as her worth exceeds the common nonsensical dolls of the age;---but for thy compeers, may they never taste any thing less in this world---than the satisfaction resulting from heaven-born charity! and in the next, may they and you receive that blest greeting---"Well done, thou good and faithful," &c. &c. Tell your girls that I will kiss them twice in the same place---troth, a poor reward; ---but more than that---I will respect them in my heart, amidst the casual foibles of worldly prejudice and common usage. I shall look to their charitable hearts, and that shall spread a crown of glory over every transient defect. The poor woman brings this in her hand;---she means to thank you---your noble L——, your good girls---her benefactors ---her saviours. I too would thank---but that I know the opportunity I have afforded you of doing what you best love, makes you the obliged party---the obliger, your faithful friend.

LETTER LXII.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. K——.

Richmond, Oct. 20, 1769.

WHAT, my honest friend K——, I am heartily glad to see you, quoth I---long look'd-for come at last. Well, we will have done with that;---you have made ample amends for your silence---have approved yourself, what I ever esteemed you---an honest, hearty, good lad. As to your apologizing about your abilities for writing---'tis all a hum---you write sense;---and verily, my good friend, he that wishes to do better must be a coxcomb. You say you was thrown from your horse but once---in my conscience, I think once full oft enough---I am glad, however, you escaped so well. The description of your journey I return you thanks for---it pleased me much ---and proved that you looked rather farther than your horse's head. A young man

man should turn travel---home---leisure ---or employment---all to the one grand end of improving himself. From your account of Dalkeith, now view it "in my mind's eye," (as Hamlet says), and think it a delightful spot. I was wrong, I find, in my notions of the Edinburghers ---for I judged them the grand patterns for---cleanliness---politeness---and generosity. Your birth-day entertainments made a blaze in our papers, which said, among other things, that the puncheons of rum stood as thick in your park as the trees---oh! how I licked my lips, and wished the distance (400 miles) less between us. You did not say a word about coming back again. Poor Pat has paid his last debt---peace and bliss to his spirit! rest to his bones!---his wife and daughter (both with child) and his youngest child all came down;---what a scene had I to be a spectator of!---trust me, James, I cried like a whipt school-boy! ---But then my noble master---Great God reward him!---Tell me not of ninety covers---splendour---and feasting ---To wipe away the tears of distress, to make the heart of the widow to sing for joy---may such actions ever (as they have long been) be the characteristic of the good duke of M——! Dr. James, thy favourite, twice came here:---at his first visit he gave no hope---the next day he came and poor Pat had resigned up his spirit two hours before he got here;---his grace paid him the tribute, the rich tribute of many tears---and ordered me to get a lodging for his widow and children:---in the evening he ordered me to go to them for him---and acquaint Mrs. W—— how very sensible he was of her great loss, as well as his own---that he would ever be a friend to her---and as the boy---though he was perfectly well satisfied with his conduct in his place---yet if he would like any trade better than continuing his servant---he would put him out, and support him through his apprenticeship;---and he would give him a year to consider it.---Pat has chose to stay, and his grace promises whoever uses him ill shall be no servant here:---on the night of his interment, after all was over, the duke wrote to the widow himself, and inclosed a twenty pound bill ---and repeated his promises.---Your own heart, my dear James, will make the best comment---which is grandest---one such action---or ten birth-days---though in truth the latter has its merit---it creates business and helps the poor---I suppose you will expect me to say something of our family. Her grace, I am truly sorry to say it, has been but poorly for some time---and indeed is but indifferent now ---God of his mercy grant her better health! ---and every good that can contribute to her happiness!---The good Marquis is with us---Are not you tired? This is a deuced long letter. Well, one word more, and then farewell. Mrs. M—— is grown cherous---has left off swearing and modelling. S—— is turned Jew, and is to be circumcised next passover. W—— is turned fine gentleman---and left off work---and I, your humble friend, I am for my sins turned Methodist. Thank God! we are all pretty hobbling as to health---Dame Sancho will be much obliged to you for your kind mention of her---she and the brats are very well thank Heaven! Abraham gives up the stockings---and mokey Tom his box---they both, with all the rest, join in love and best wishes to your worship. I, for my own share, own myself obliged to you---and think myself honoured in your acknowledging yourself my pupil; were I an ambitious man, I should never forgive you,---for in truth you by far excel your master:---go on, and prosper, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's---laugh at all the tall boys in the kingdom. I rest, dear Jemmy, thy true friend and obliged fellow-servant.

LETTER LXIII.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. M——.

March 21, 1770.

"He, who cannot stem his anger's tide,
"Doth a wild horse without a bridle ride."

It is, my dear M——, the same with the rest of our passions; we have Reason given us for our rudder---Religion is our sheet anchor---our fixed star, Hope ---Conscience our faithful monitor---and Happiness the grand reward. We all in this manner can preach up trite maxims:---ask any jackass the way to happiness---and like me they will give vent to pick-ed-up common-place sayings---but mark how they act---why just as you and I do ---content with acknowledging a slight acquaintance with wisdom, but ashamed

of

of appearing to act under her sacred guidance—You do me much more honour than I deserve, in wishing to correspond with me—the balance is entirely in your favour—but I fancy you were under the malady of your country, hypp'd for want of fresh air and exercise—so, sitting in a pensive attitude, with lack-lustre eye, and vacant countenance—the thought obtruded on your fancy to give Sancho a letter—and after a hard conflict 'twixt laziness and inclination—the deed was done. I verily believe you commit errors—only for the sake of handsomely apologizing for them, as tumblers oft make slips to surprize beholders with their agility in recovering themselves. I saw Mr. B—— last night—who by the way I like much—the man I mean—and not the genius (though of the first rate) —he chattered and laughed like a soul ignorant of evil.—He asked about a motley creature at ———. I told him with more truth than wit—that you was hypp'd—I inclose you a proof print:—and how does Mad. M——, &c. &c.? Is Miss S—— better?—Is Mrs. H——, Mrs. T——, Mrs. H——? Lord preserve me! what in the name of mischief have I to do with all this combustible matter? Is it not enough for me that I am fast sliding down the vale of years? Have not I a gout? six brats, and a wife? —Oh reason! where art thou? you see by this how much easier it is to preach than to do! But stop—we know good from evil; and, in serious truth, we have powers sufficient to withstand vice, if we will choose to exert ourselves. In the field, if we know the strength and situation of the enemy, we place out-posts and sentinels—and take every prudent method to avoid surprize. In common life, we must do the same;—and trust me, my honest friend, a victory gained over passion, immorality, and pride, deserves *Te Deums*, better than those gained in the fields of ambition and blood. Here's letter for letter, and so farewell, yours—as you behave.

LETTER LXIV.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. B——.

London,
My dear Friend, July 18, 1772.

NOTHING could possibly be more welcome than the favour of your truly obliging letter, which I received the day before yesterday. Know, my worthy young man—that it is the pride of my heart when I reflect that, through the favour of Providence, I was the humble means of good to so worthy an object. May you live to be a credit to your great and good friends, and a blessing and comfort to your honest parents!—May you, my child, pursue, through God's mercy, the right paths of humility, candour, temperance, benevolence—with an early piety, gratitude, and praise to the Almighty Giver of all your good!—gratitude—and love for the noble and generous benefactors his providence has so kindly moved in your behalf! Ever let your actions be such as your own heart can approve—always think before you speak, and pause before you act—always suppose yourself before the eyes of Sir William—and Mr. Garrick.—To think justly, is the way to do rightly—and by that means you will ever be at peace within. I am happy to hear Sir W—— cares so much about your welfare —his character is great, because it is good; as to your noble friend Mr. Garrick—his virtues are above all praise—he has not only the best head in the world, but the best heart also;—he delights in doing good. Your father and mother called on me last week, to shew me a letter which Mr. Garrick has wrote to you—keep it, my dear boy, as a treasure beyond all price—it would do honour to the pen of a divine—it breathes the spirit of father—friend—and christian;—indeed I know no earthly being that I can reverence so much as your exalted and noble friend and patron Mr. Garrick. Your father and mother, I told you, I saw lately—they were both well, and their eyes overflowed at the goodness of your noble patrons—and with the honest hope that you would prove yourself not unworthy of their kindness.

I thank you for your kindness to my poor black brethren—I flatter myself you will find them not ungrateful—they act commonly from their feelings: I have observed a dog will love those who use him kindly—and surely if so, negroes in their state of ignorance and bondage will not act less generously, if I may judge them by myself—I should suppose kindness would do any thing with them;—my soul melts at kindness —but the contrary, I own with shame, makes

—makes me almost a savage.—If you can with conveniency—when you write again—send me half a dozen cocoa-nuts, I shall esteem them for your sake—but do not think of it if there is the least difficulty. In regard to wages, I think you acted quite right—do not seek too hastily to be independent—it is quite time enough yet for one of your age to be your own master. Read Mr. Garrick's letter night and morning—put it next your heart—impress it on your memory—and may the God of all mercy give you grace to follow his friendly dictates!—I shall ever truly rejoice to hear from you, and your well-doing will be a comfort for me ever; it is not in your own power and option to command riches—wisdom and health are immediately the gift of God—but it is in your own breast to be good—therefore, my dear child, make the only right election—be good, and trust the rest to God; and remember he is about your bed, and about your paths, and spieth out all your ways. I am, with pride and delight, your true friend.

LETTER LXV.

Ignatius Sancho to Mrs. H——.

February 9, 1774.

It is the most puzzling affair in nature, to a mind that labours under obligations, to know how to express its feelings;—your former tender solicitude for my well-doing—and your generous remembrance in the present order—appear friendly beyond the common actions of those we in general style good sort of people;—but I will not teaze you with my nonsensical thanks—for I believe such kind of hearts as you are blest with have sufficient reward in the consciousness of acting humanely. I opened shop on Saturday the 29th of January—and have met with a success truly flattering;—it shall be my study and constant care not to forfeit the good opinion of my friends. I have pleasure in congratulating you upon Mrs. W——'s happy delivery and pleasing increase of her family;—it is the hope and wish of my heart—that your comforts in all things may multiply with your years—that in the certain great end—you may immerge without pain—full of hope—from corruptible pleasure—to immortal and incorruptible life—happiness without end—and past all human comprehension;—there may you and I—and all we love (or care for) meet! the follies—the parties—distinctions—feuds of ambition—enthusiasm—lust—and anger of this miserable motley world—all totally forgot—every idea lost, and absorbed in the blissful mansions of redeeming love.

I have not seen Sir Jacob near a fortnight—but hope and conclude him well. R—— is well, and grows very fat—an easy mind—full purse—and a good table—great health—and much indulgence—all these conduce terribly to plumpness. I must beg, when you see Mr. ———, if not improper or inconvenient, that you will inform him—that where there is but little—every little helps; I think he is too humane to be offended at the liberty—and too honest to be displeased with a truth. I am, with grateful thanks to Mr. H——, your sincerely humble servant and poor friend.

My best half and Sanchonetta's are all well.

LETTER LXVI.

Ignatius Sancho to Miss L——.

Sept. 12, 1775.

There is nothing in nature more vexatious than contributing to the uneasiness of those, whose partiality renders them anxious for our well-doing—the honest heart dilates with rapture when it can happily contribute pleasure to its friends. You see by this that I am coxcomb enough to suppose me and mine of consequence! but if it is so—it is such as you whose partial goodness have grafted that folly on my natural trunk of dulness. I am, in truth, in a very unfit mood for writing—for poor Lydia is very so so—Mrs. Sancho not very stout;—and for me, I assure you, that of my pair of feet—two are at this instant in pain! This is the worst side—but courage! Hope! delusive cheating Hope! beckons Self-love, and enlists him of her side—and, together, use their friendly eloquence to persuade me that better times are coming. Your beloved wife (cries Self-love) will have a happy time, and be up soon, strong and hearty. Your child (cries Hope) will get the bet-

ter of her illness—and grow up a blessing and comfort to your evening life—and your friend will soon be in town and enliven your winter prospects Trust, trust in the Almighty—his providence is your shield—it is his love, it is his mercy, which has hitherto supported and kept you up. See, see! cries Hope! look where Religion, with Faith on her right, and Charity on her left, and a numerous train of blessings in her rear, come to thy support. Fond foolish mortal, leave complaining—all will be right—all is right. Adieu, my good friend—write me somet'in, to chase away idle fears, and to strengthen hope. Too true it is, that where the tender passions are concerned, our sex are cowards. Yours sincerely.

Mrs. Sancho sends her best wishes.

LETTER LXVII.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. M——.

July 23, 1777.

YES—too true it is—for the many (aye, and some of those many carry their heads high) too true for the miserable—the needy—the sick—for many, alas! who now may have no helper—for the child of folly poor S—, and even for thy worthless friend Sancho. It is too true, that the Almighty has called to her rich reward—she who, whilst on earth, approved herself his best delegate. How blind, how silly, is the mortal who places any trust or hope in aught but the Almighty!—You are just, beautifully just, in your sketch of the vicissitudes of worldly bliss.—We rise the lover—dine the husband—and too oft, alas! lay down the forlorn widower. Never so struck in my life;—it was on Friday night, between ten and eleven, just preparing for my concluding pipe—the duke of M——'s man knocks. "Have you heard the bad news?—No. "The Duchess of Queensberry died last night!"—I felt fifty different sensations—unbelief was uppermost—when he crushed my incredibility, by saying he had been to know how his Grace did—who was also very poorly in health. Now the preceding day, Thursday (the day on which she expired), I had received a very penitential letter from S——, dated from St. Helena,—this letter I inclosed in a long tedious epistle of my own—and sent to Petersham, believing the family to be all there. The day after you left town her Grace died;—that day week she was at my door—the day after I had the honour of a long audience in her dressing-room. Alas! this hour blessed with health—crowned with honors—loaded with riches, and encircled with friends—the next reduced to a lump of poor clay—a tenement for worms!—Earth re-possesses part of what she gave—and the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire:—her disorder was a stoppage—she fell ill the evening of the Friday that I last saw her—continued in her full senses to the last. The good she had done reached the skies long before her lamented death—and are the only heralds that are worth the pursuit of wisdom;—as to her bad deeds, I have never heard of them. Had it been for the best, God would have lent her a little longer to a foolish world, which hardly deserved so good a woman;—for my own part, I have lost a friend—and perhaps it is better so. "Whatever is," &c. &c. I wish S—— knew this heavy news, for many reasons. I am inclined to believe her Grace's death is the only thing that will most conduce to his reform. I fear neither his gratitude nor sensibility will be much hurt upon hearing the news—it will act upon his fears, and make him do *right* upon a *base* principle. Hang him! he teazes me whenever I think of him. I supped last night with St. ——; he called in just now, and says he has a right to be remembered to you. You and he are two old monkies—the more I abuse and rate you, the better friend you think me. As you have found out that your spirits govern your head—you will of course contrive every method of keeping your instrument in tune:—sure I am that bathing—riding—walking—in succession—the two latter not violent—will brace your nerves—purify your blood—invigorate its circulation:—add to the rest *continency*—yes, again I repeat it, *continency*;—before you reply, think—rethink—and think again—look into your *Bible*—look in *Young*—peep into your own breast—if your heart warrants what your head counsels—act then boldly.—Oh! *apropos*—pray thank my noble friend Mrs. H—— for her friendly present of C— J—; it did Mrs. Sancho service, and does poor Billy great good—who

—who has (through his teeth) been plagued with a cough—which I hope will not turn to the whooping sort; the girls greet you as their respected school-master. As to your spirited kind offer of a F——, why when you please—you know what I intend doing with it.

Poor Lady S——, I find, still lingers this side the world. Alas! when will the happy period arrive, that the sons of mortality may greet each other with the joyful news, that sin, pain, sorrow, and death, are no more; skies without clouds, earth without crimes, life without death, world without end!—peace, bliss, and harmony, where the Lord God—All in all—King of kings—Lord of lords—reigneth—omnipotent—for ever—for ever!—may you, my dear M——, and all I love—yea the whole race of Adam, join with my unworthy weak self, in the stupendous—astonishing—soul-cheering Hallelujahs!—where charity may be swallowed up in love—hope in bliss—and faith in glorious certainty! We will mix, my boy, with all countries, colours, faiths—see the countless multitudes of the first world—the myriads descended from the—ark—the patriarchs—sages—prophets—and heroes! My head turns round at the vast idea! we will mingle with them, and try to untwist the vast chain of blessed Providence—which puzzles and baffles human understanding. Adieu. Yours, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. M——.

August 14, 1777.

My dear M——, I know full well thy silence must proceed from ill health. To say it concerns me, is dull nonsense—self-love without principle will inspire even devils with affection; by so much less as thou apprehendest thy friend has diabolical about him—so mayest thou judge of his feelings towards thee. Why wilt thou not part with thy hair? most assuredly I do believe it would relieve thee past measure—thou dost not fancy thy strength (like Sampson's the Israelite) lieth in thy hair? Remember he was shorn through folly—he lost his wits previous to his losing his locks—do thou consent to lose thine, in order to save thy better judgment. I know no worse soul-sinking pain than the head-ach, though (thank Heaven) I am not often visited with it. I long to see thee—and will soon, if in my power:—some odd folks would think it would have *been* but good manners to have thanked you for the fawn—but then, says the punster, that would have *been* so like *fawn*-ing—which J. M——— loves not, *no*, nor Sancho either;—it is the hypocrite's key to the great man's heart—'tis the resource of cowardly curs—and deceitful b—p—s—it is the spaniel's sort—and man's disgrace—it is—in short, the day is so hot—that I cannot say at present any more about it—but that the fawn was large, fresh, and worthy the giver, the receiver, and the joyous souls that eat it. Billy has suffered much in getting his teeth—I have just wished him joy by his mother's desire, who says that he took resolution at last, and walked to her some few steps quite alone. Albeit it gave me no small pleasure—yet, upon consideration, what I approve of now, perhaps, (should I live to see him at man's estate), I might then disapprove—unless God's grace should as ably support him through the quick-sands—rocks—and shoals of life—as it has happily the honest being I am now writing to. God give you health!—your own conduct will secure peace—your friends bread. As to honours, leave it with titles—to knaves—and be content with that of an honest man, "the noblest work of God." Shave—shave—shave! Farewell, yours sincerely.

LETTER LXIX.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. J— W—e.

My dear W—e, May 4, 1778.

Your short letter gave me much pleasure—which would have been enlarged, had your epistle been longer;—but I make allowances—as I ought—for the number of friends who wish equally with me—and expect to be gratified. You are greatly fortunate in enjoying your health—for which I doubt not but you are truly thankful to the Almighty Giver. As to your success, it is the best comment upon your conduct;—for rectitude of principle and humble deportment, added to strict attention and good nature, must make even fools and knaves wish you well.—

though envy will mix itself with the transient kindness of such—but with such noble natures as you went out happily connected with, you are every day sowing the good seeds of your future fortune. I hope to live to see you return—the comfort and honour of your good father and family;—but observe—I do not wish you half a million, clogged with the tears and blood of the poor natives;—no—a decent competence got with honesty—and that will keep increasing like the widow's cruse, and descend down to posterity with accumulated blessings. You desire to transfer your share in me to your brother Joe;—now be it known to you—Joe has interest sufficient in his own natural right with me, to secure him every attention in my poor power. But you flatter, my good friend—though your flattery forms a good excuse with it—you flatter the poor.

I say nothing of politics—I hate such subjects;—the public papers will inform you of mistakes—blood—taxes—misery—murder—the obstinacy of a few—and the madness and villany of a many. I expect a very, very long letter from you—in answer to a sermon I wrote you last year. Miss ——— is still divinely fair;—she is a good girl, but no match for Nabobs. Mrs. C——— is as handsome as ever—and R——— as friendly. God bless them! feasting or fasting! sleeping or waking! May God's providence watch over and protect them—and all such!—Your brother Frank is a sweet boy—a painter, who would wish to draw a cherub, will find no fitter subject. The C———ds—but what have I to do with good people, who will of course all write for themselves?—so let them. Your father!—Oh, Jack! what a cordial!—what a rich luxury is it to be able to contribute, by well-doing, to a father's, nay a whole family of kindred love, and heart-felt affection! what a bliss to add to all their happiness—and to insure your own at the same time!—May this high pleasure be thine! and may the God of truth and fountain of all good enrich thy heart and head with his spirit and wisdom—crown your labours with success—and guard you from avarice—ambition—and every Asiatic evil—so that your native land may receive you with riches and honour—your friends with true joy—heightened with sincere respect! So wishes—so prophesies—thy true friend and obliged servant.

LETTER LXX.

Ignatius Sancho to Mr. W——e.

Charles-street, March 13, 1779.

You wish me to write a consolatory letter to Mrs. W———e. My good friend, what can I possibly write but your good sense must have anticipated? The soul-endearing soothings of cordial love have the best and strongest effects upon the grief-torn mind:—you have of course told her that thanks are due, greatly so! to a merciful God, who might have bereaved her of a child, instead of a worthy cousin!—or that she ought to feel comfort—and to acknowledge divine mercy—that it was not her husband:—that to lament the death of that amiable girl, is false sorrow in the extreme:—why lament the great bliss and *choice prize* of what we love?—what is it she has not gained by an early death?—You will say—she was good—and will suppose that in the tender connexions of wife—friend—and mother—she would have been an honoured and esteemed example. True, she might—and it is as true, she might have been unhappily paired, ill-matched to some morose, ill-minded, uneven bashaw;—she might have fell from affluence to want—from honour to infamy—from innocence to guilt:—in short, we mistake too commonly the objects of our grief;—the living demand our tears—the dead (if their lives were virtuous) our gratulations;—in your case, all that can be said is—earth has lost an opening sweet flower (which, had it lasted longer, must of course soon fade)—and heaven has gained an angel, which will bloom for ever—so let us hear no more of grief. We all must follow. No! let us rejoice, with your worthy friend Mrs. ———*. Joy to the good couple! May they each find their respective wishes! May he find the grateful acknowledgment of obliged and pleasing duty!—and she, the substantial, fond, solid rewards due to a rectitude of conduct, marked strongly with kindness and wisdom! And may you, my friend!—but my leg aches—my foot swells—I can only say, my love to the

* This union was remarkable for disparity of years; the bridegroom being 78, the bride in the bloom of youth.

C——ds,

C——ds, and to poor Joe and Frank. Read this to Mrs. W——e. My silly reasoning may be too weak to reach her; —but, however, she may smile at my absurdities;—if so, I shall have a comfort—as I ever wish to give pleasure to her dear sex—and the pride of my heart is ever to please one—alas!—and that one a wife. So writes thy true friend.

Mr. W——e comes as far as P— Gardens—but cannot reach Charles-street.

How's that?

I hear my scheme of taxation was inserted directly, and should be glad to see the paper, if easily got.

Vanity.

LETTER LXXI.

Ignatius Sancho to J—— S——, Esq.

Dear Sir, Charles-street, June 16, 1779.

In truth, I was never more puzzled in my life than at this present writing—the acts of common kindness, or the effusions of mere common-will, I should know what to reply to—but by my conscience, you act upon so grand a scale of urbanity, that a man should possess a mind as noble, and a heart as ample, as yourself! before he attempts even to be grateful upon paper. You have made me richer than ever I was in my life—till this day I thought a bottle of good wine a large possession. Sir, I will enjoy your goodness with a glad heart—and every deserving soul I meet with shall share a glass with me, and join in drinking the generous donor's health. Mrs. Sancho's eyes betray her feelings—she bids me think for her which I do most sincerely, and for myself.

LETTER LXXII.

Ignatius Sancho to Mrs. H——.

Dear Madam, June 17, 1779.

Your son, who is a welcome visitor wherever he comes, made himself more welcome to me by the kind proof of your regard he brought in his hands. Souls like yours, who delight in giving pleasure, enjoy a heaven on earth; for I am convinced that the disposition of the mind in a great measure forms either the heaven or hell in both worlds, I rejoice sincerely at the happiness of Mrs. W——, and may their happiness increase with family and trade!—and may you both enjoy the heart-felt delight of seeing your children's children walking in the track of grace!—I have, to my shame be it spoken, intended writing to you for these twelve months past—but in truth I was deterred through a fear of giving pain: our history has had little in it but cares and anxieties—which (as it is the well-experienced lot of mortality) we struggle with it, with religion on one hand, and hope on the other.

Mr. W——, whose looks and address bespeak a good heart and good sense, called on me. I will not say how much I was pleased—pray make my kindest respects to your good partner, and tell him, I think I have a right to trouble him with my musical nonsense. I wish it better for my own sake—bad as it is, I know he will not despise it, because he has more good-nature:—I hear a good report of Mr. S——, and that his humanity has received the thanks of a community in a public manner. May he! and you! and all I love, enjoy the blissful feelings of large humanity! There is a plaudit—as much superior to man's as heaven is above earth! Great God, in thy mercy and unbounded goodness, grant that even I may rejoice through eternity with those I have respected and esteemed here! Mrs. Sancho joins me in love to yourself and Mr. H——. Your son Jacob is the delight of my girls—whenever he calls on us, the work is flung by, and the mouths all distended with laughter: he is a vile romp with children. I am, dear Madam, with true esteem and respect, your obliged servant.

LETTER LXXIII.

Ignatius Sancho to Miss L——.

Charles-street, Sept. 11, 1779.

I cannot forbear returning my dear Miss L—— our united thanks for her generous present—which came exactly in time to grace poor Marianne's birth-day, which was yesterday:—the bird was good, and well-dressed; that and a large apple-pye feasted the whole family of the

Sanchos. Miss L—— was toasted; and although we had neither ringing of bells, nor firing of guns, yet the day was celebrated with mirth and decency—and a degree of sincere joy and urbanity seldom to be seen on R——l birth-days. Mary, as queen of the day, invited two or three young friends—her breast filled with delight, unmixed with cares, her heart danced in her eyes—and she looked the happy mortal. Great God of mercy and love! why, why, in a few fleeting years, are all the gay day dreams of youthful innocence to vanish? why can we not purchase prudence, decency, and wisdom, but at the expence of our peace? Slow circumspect caution implies suspicion—and where suspicion dwells, confidence dwells not. I believe I write nonsense—but the dull weather, added to a dull imagination, must, and I trust will, incline you to excuse me: if I mistake not, writing requires—what I could tell you, but dare not—for I have smarted once already. In short, I write just what I think—and you know Congreve says somewhere, that

"Thought precedes the will,"

and

"Error lives ere reason can be born."

Now will—reason—and gratitude, all three powerfully impel me to thank you—not for your goose—nor for any pecuniary self-gratifying marks of generosity—but for the benevolent urbanity of your nature—which counsels your good heart to think of the lowly and less fortunate. But what are my thanks, what the echoed praises of the world, to the heart-approving sensations of true charity!—which is but the prelude to the divine address at the last day. "Well done, thou good," &c. &c. That you and all I love—and even poor me—may hear those joyful words, is the prayer of yours, &c. &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

David Hume, Esq. to ———.

Sir, Edinburgh, Aug. 16, 1760.

I am not surprised to find by your letter, that Mr. Gray should have entertained suspicions with regard to the authenticity of these Fragments of our Highland poetry. The first time I was shewn the copies of some of them in manuscript, by our friend John Home, I was inclined to be a little incredulous on that head; but Mr. Home removed my scruples, by informing me of the manner in which he procured them from Mr. Macpherson, the translator. These two gentlemen were drinking the waters together at Moffat last autumn; when their conversation fell upon Highland poetry, which Mr. Macpherson extolled very highly. Our friend, who knew him to be a good scholar, and a man of taste, found his curiosity excited; and asked whether he had ever translated any of them? Mr. Macpherson replied, that he never had attempted any such thing; and doubted whether it was possible to transfuse such beauties into our language; but for Mr. Home's satisfaction, and in order to give him a general notion of the strain of that wild poetry, he would endeavour to turn one of them into English. He accordingly brought him one next day; which our friend was so much pleased with, that he never ceased soliciting Mr. Macpherson till he insensibly produced that small volume which has been published.

After this volume was in every body's hands, and universally admired, we heard every day new reasons, which put the authenticity, not the great antiquity, which the translator ascribes to them, beyond all question: for their antiquity is a point which must be ascertained by reasoning; though the arguments he employs seem very probable and convincing. But certain it is, that these poems are in every body's mouth in the Highlands, have been handed down from father to son, and are of an age beyond all memory and tradition.

In the family of every Highland chieftain there was anciently retained a bard, whose office was the same with that of the Greek rhapsodists; and the general subject of the poems which they recited, was the wars of Fingal: an epoch no less celebrated among them, than the wars of Troy among the Greek poets. This custom is not even yet altogether abolished; the bard and piper are esteemed the most honourable offices in a chieftain's family, and these two characters are frequently united in the same person.

Adam

Adam Smith, the celebrated professor in Glasgow, told me, that the piper of the Argyleshire militia repeated to him all those poems which Mr Macpherson has translated, and many more of equal beauty. Major Mackay, lord Rae's brother, also told me, that he remembers them perfectly; as likewise did the laird of Macfarlane, the greatest antiquarian whom we have in this country, and who insists so strongly on the historical truth, as well as on the poetical beauty of these productions. I could add the laird and lady Macleod to these authorities, with many more, if these were not sufficient; as they live in different parts of the Highlands, very remote from each other, and they could only be acquainted with poems that had become in a manner national works, and had gradually spread themselves into every mouth, and imprinted on every memory.

Every body in Edinburgh is so convinced of it is truth, that we have endeavoured to put Mr. Macpherson on a way of procuring us more of these wild flowers. He is a modest sensible young man, not settled in any living, but employed as a private tutor in Mr. Graham of Balgowan's family, a way of life which he is not fond of. We have therefore set about a subscription of a guinea, or two guineas a-piece, in order to enable him to quit that family, and undertake a mission into the Highlands, where he hopes to recover more of these Fragments. There is, in particular, a country surgeon somewhere in Lochaber, who, he says, can recite a great number of them, but never committed them to writing; as indeed the orthography of the Highland language is not fixed, and the natives have always employed more the sword than the pen. This surgeon has by heart the epic poem mentioned by Mr. Macpherson in his preface; and as he is somewhat old, and is the only person living that has it entire, we are in the more haste to recover a monument, which will certainly be regarded as a curiosity in the republic of letters.

I own, that my first and chief objection to the authenticity of these Fragments, was not on account of the noble and even tender strokes which they contain; for these are the offspring of Genius and Passion in all countries; I was only surprised at the regular plan which appears in some of these pieces, and which seems to be the work of a more cultivated age. None of the specimens of barbarous poetry known to us, the Hebrew, Arabian, or any other, contained this species of beauty: and if a regular epic poem, or even any thing of that kind, nearly regular, should also come from that rough climate, or uncivilized people, it would appear to me a phenomenon altogether unaccountable.

I remember, Mr. Macpherson told me, that the heroes of this Highland epic were not only like Homer's heroes, their own butchers, bakers, and cooks, but also their own shoemakers, carpenters, and smiths. He mentioned an incident, which put this matter in a remarkable light. A warrior has the head of his spear struck off in battle; upon which he immediately retires behind the army, where a forge was erected; makes a new one; hurries back to the action; pierces his enemy, while the iron, which was yet red-hot, hisses in the wound. This imagery you will allow to be singular, and so well imagined, that it would have been adopted by Homer, had the manners of the Greeks allowed him to have employed it.

I forgot to mention, as another proof of the authenticity of these poems, and even of the reality of the adventures contained in them, that the names of the heroes, Fingal, Oscur, Osur, Oscan, Dermid, are still given in the Highlands to large mastiffs, in the same manner as we affix to them the names of Cæsar, Pompey, Hector; or the French that of Marlborough.

It gives me pleasure to find, that a person of so fine a taste as Mr. Gray approves of these Fragments, as it may convince us, that our fondness of them is not altogether founded on national prepossessions, which, however, you know to be a little strong. The translation is elegant; but I made an objection to the author, which I wish you would communicate to Mr. Gray, that we may judge of the justness of it. There appeared to me many verses in his prose, and all of them in the same measure with Mr. Shenstone's famous ballad,

> Ye shepherds, so careless and free,
> Whose flocks never carelessly roam, &c.

Pray ask Mr. Gray whether he made the same

same remark, and whether he thinks it a blemish? Your's most sincerely.

LETTER LXXV.

David Hume, Esq. to Dr. Campbell.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, Jan. 7, 1762.

IT has so seldom happened that controversies in philosophy, much more in theology, have been carried on without producing a personal quarrel between the parties, that I must regard my present situation as somewhat extraordinary, who have reason to give you thanks, for the civil and obliging manner in which you have conducted the dispute against me, on so interesting a subject as that of miracles. Any little symptoms of vehemence, of which I formerly used the freedom to complain, when you favoured me with a sight of the manuscript, are either removed or explained away, or atoned for by civilities which are far beyond what I have any title to pretend to. It will be natural for you to imagine that I will fall upon some shift to evade the force of your arguments, and to retain my former opinion in the point controverted between us; but it is impossible for me not to see the ingenuity of your performance, and the great learning which you have displayed against me.

I consider myself as very much honoured in being thought worthy of an answer by a person of so much merit; and as I find that the public does you justice with regard to the ingenuity and good composition of your piece, I hope you will have no reason to repent engaging with an antagonist, whom perhaps in strictness you might have ventured to neglect. I own to you that I never felt so violent an inclination to defend myself as at present, when I am thus fairly challenged by you, and I think I could find something specious at least to urge in my defence; but as I had fixed a resolution, in the beginning of my life, always to leave the public to judge between my adversaries and me, without making any reply, I must adhere inviolably to this resolution, otherways my silence on any future occasion would be construed an inability to answer, and would be matter of triumph against me.

It may perhaps amuse you to learn the first hint which suggested to me that argument which you have so strenuously attacked. I was walking in the cloysters of the Jesuits College of La Fleche, a town in which I passed two years of my youth, and engaged in a conversation with a Jesuit of some parts and learning, who was relating to me, and urging some nonsensical miracle performed in their convent, when I was tempted to dispute against him; and as my head was full of the topics of my Treatise of Human Nature, which I was at this time composing, this argument immediately occurred to me, and I thought it very much gravelled my companion; but at last he observed to me, that it was impossible for that argument to have any solidity, because it operated equally against the Gospel as the Catholic miracles, which observation I thought proper to admit as a sufficient answer. I believe you will allow that the freedom at least of this reasoning makes it somewhat extraordinary to have been the produce of a convent of Jesuits, though perhaps you may think the sophistry of it savours plainly of the place of its birth.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dr. Smollett to Daniel Mackercher, Esq.*

Dear Sir, Chelsea, Feb. 23, 1753.

I SHALL take it as a particular favour, if you will peruse the inclosed rough draught of a letter which I intend to send to Mr. Hume Campbell, provided you think it contains nothing actionable. I hope you will excuse this trouble, and believe me to be with equal sincerity and attachment, dear Sir, your very humble servant.

Sir,

I HAVE waited several days in hope of receiving from you an acknowledgment touching those harsh, unjustifiable (and let me add), unmannerly expressions which you annexed to my name, in

* This gentleman's name is familiar to the public, as well from the account of his life inserted in The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, as from the part he took in the celebrated Anglesea cause.

the

the Court of King's Bench, when you opened the cause depending between me and Peter Gordon; and as I do not find that you have discovered the least inclination to retract what you said to my prejudice, I have taken this method to refresh your memory, and to demand such satisfaction as a gentleman injured as I am has a right to claim.

The business of a counsellor is, I apprehend, to investigate the truth in behalf of his client; but surely he has no privilege to blacken and asperse the character of the other party, without any regard to veracity or decorum. That you assumed this unwarrantable privilege in commenting upon your brief, I believe you will not pretend to deny, when I remind you of those peculiar flowers of elocution which you poured forth on that notable occasion. First of all, in order to inspire the court with horror and contempt for the defendant, you gave the jury to understand that you did not know this Dr. Smollett; and, indeed, his character appeared in such a light from the facts contained in your brief, that you never should desire to know him. I should be glad to learn of what consequence it could be to the cause, whether you did or did not know the defendant, or whether you had or had not an inclination to be acquainted with him? Sir, this was a pitiful personality, calculated to depreciate the character of a gentleman to whom you was a stranger, merely to gratify the rancour and malice of an abandoned fellow who had fee'd you to speak in his cause. Did I ever seek your acquaintance, or court your protection? I had been informed, indeed, that you was a lawyer of some reputation, and, when the suit commenced, would have retained you for that reason, had not I been anticipated by the plaintiff; but, far from coveting your acquaintance, I never dreamed of exchanging a word with you on that or any other subject: you might therefore have spared your invidious declaration, until I had put it in your power to mortify me with a repulse, which, upon my honour, would never have been the case, were you a much greater man than you really are. Yet this was not the only expedient you used to prepossess the jury against me. You was hardy enough to represent me as a person devoid of all humanity and remorse; as a barbarous ruffian, who in a cowardly manner had, with two associates as barbarous as myself, called a peaceable gentleman out of his lodgings, and assaulted him in the dark, with intent to murder. Such an horrid imputation, publicly fixed upon a person whose innocence you could hardly miss to know, is an outrage, for which, I believe, I might find reparation from the law itself, notwithstanding your artful manner of qualifying the expression, by saying, provided the facts can be proved. This low subterfuge may, for aught I know, screen you from a prosecution at law, but can never acquit you in that court which every man of honour holds in his own breast. I say, you must have known my innocence from the weakness of the evidence which you produced, and with which you either was or ought to have been previously acquainted; as well as from my general character and that of my antagonist, which it was your duty to have learned. I will venture to say, you did know my character, and in your heart believed me incapable of such brutality as you laid to my charge. Surely, I do not over-rate my own importance in affirming, that I am not so obscure in life as to have escaped the notice of Mr. Hume Campbell; and I will be bold enough to challenge him and the whole world to prove one instance in which my integrity was called, or at least left, in question. Have not I therefore reason to suppose that, in spight of your own internal conviction, you undertook the cause of a wretch, whose ingratitude, villany and rancour, are, I firmly believe, without example in this kingdom; that you magnified a slight correction bestowed by his benefactor, in consequence of the most insolent provocation, into a deliberate and malicious scheme of assassination; and endeavoured, with all the virulence of defamation, to destroy the character, and even the life, of an injured person, who, as well as yourself, is a gentleman by birth, education, and profession? In favour of whom, and in consequence of what, was all this zeal manifested, all this slander exhausted, and all this scurrility discharged? Your client, whom you dignified with the title of Esquire, and endeavoured to raise to the same footing with me in point of station

and

and character, you knew to be an abject miscreant, whom my compassion and humanity had lifted from the most deplorable scenes of distress; whom I had saved from imprisonment and ruin; whom I had clothed and fed for a series of years; whom I had occasionally assisted with my purse, credit, and influence. You knew, or ought to have known, that, after having received a thousand marks of my benevolence, and prevailed upon me to indorse notes for the support of his credit, he withdrew himself into the verge of the court, and took up his habitation in a paltry alehouse, where he not only set me and the rest of his creditors at defiance, but provoked me by scurrilous and insolent letters and messages to chastise him in such a manner as gave him an handle for this prosecution, in which you signalized yourself as his champion, for a very honourable consideration. There is something so palpably ungrateful, perfidious, and indeed diabolical, in the conduct of the prosecutor, that, even in these degenerate days, I wonder how he could find an attorney to appear in his behalf. *O tempora! O mores!*—After having thus sounded the trumpet of obloquy in your preamble, and tortured every circumstance of the plaintiff's evidence to my detriment and dishonour, you attempted to subject me to the ridicule of the court, by asking a question of my first witness, which had no more relation to the cause, than if you had desired to know the name of his grandmother. What title had you to ask of a tradesman, if he knew me to be an author? What affinity had this question with the circumstances of the assault? Was not this foreign to the purpose? Was it not impertinent, and proposed with a view to put me out of countenance, and to raise the laugh of the spectators at my expence? There, indeed, you was disappointed, as you frequently are, in those little digressive efforts by which you make yourself remarkable. Though I do not pretend to possess that superlative degree of effrontery by which some people make a figure at the bar, I have assurance enough to stand the mention of my works without blushing, especially when I despise the taste, and scorn the principles, of him who would turn them to my disgrace. You succeeded, however, in one particular; I mean, in raising the indignation of my witness; of which you took all imaginable advantage, puzzling, perplexing, and browbeating him with such artifice, eagerness, and insult, as overwhelmed him with confusion, and had well nigh deprived me of the benefit of his evidence. Luckily for me, the next gentleman who was called, confirmed what the other had sworn, and proved to the satisfaction of the judge and jury, and even to your own conviction, that this terrible deliberate assassination was no more than a simple blow given to a rascal after repeated provocation, and that of the most flagrant kind; that no advantage was taken in point of weapons; and that two drabs, whom they had picked up for the purpose, had affirmed upon oath a downright falsehood, with a view to blast my reputation. You yourself was so conscious of this palpable detection, that you endeavoured to excuse them by a forced explanation, which you may depend upon it, shall not screen them from a prosecution for perjury. I will not say, that this was like patronizing a couple of gypsies who had forsworn themselves, consequently forfeited all title to the countenance, or indeed forbearance, of the court; but this I will say, that your tenderness for them was of a piece with your whole behaviour to me, which I think was equally insolent and unjust: for, granting that you had really supposed me guilty of an intended assassination, before the trial began, you saw me in the course of evidence acquitted of that suspicion, and heard the judge insist upon my innocence in his charge to the jury, who brought in their verdict accordingly. Then, Sir, you ought, in common justice, to have owned yourself mistaken, or to have taken some other opportunity of expressing your concern for what you had said to my disadvantage; though even such an acknowledgment would not have been a sufficient reparation; because, before my witnesses were called, many persons left the court with impressions to my prejudice, conceived from the calumnies which they heard you espouse and encourage. On the whole, you opened the trial with such hyperbolical impetuosity, and conducted it with such particular bitterness and rancour, that every body perceived you was

more

more than ordinarily interested; and I could not divine the mysterious bond of union that attached you to Peter Gordon, Esq until you furnished me with a key to the whole secret by that strong emphasis with which you pronounced the words Ferdinand Count Fathom. Then I discovered the source of your good will towards me, which is no other than the history of a law-suit inserted in that performance, where the author takes occasion to observe, that the counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; exerting themselves with equal industry, eloquence, and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, brow-beat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury. Did any part of this character come home to your own conscience? or did you resent it as a sarcasm levelled at the whole bench without distinction? I take it for granted, this must have been the origin of your enmity to me: because I can recollect no other circumstance in my conduct, by which I could incur the displeasure of a man whom I scarce knew by sight, and with whom I never had the least dispute, or indeed concern. If this was the case, you pay a very scurvy compliment to your own integrity, by fathering a character which is not applicable to any honest man, and give the world a handle to believe, that our courts of justice stand greatly in need of reformation. Indeed, the petulance, licence, and buffoonery of some lawyers in the exercise of their function, is a reproach upon decency and a scandal to the nation; and it is surprising that the judge, who represents his majesty's person, should suffer such insults upon the dignity of the place. But, whatever liberties of this kind are granted to the counsel, no sort of freedom, it seems, must be allowed to the evidence, who, by the bye, are of much more consequence to the cause. You will take upon you to divert the audience at the expence of a witness, by impertinent allusions to some parts of his private character and affairs; but if he pretends to retort the joke, you insult, abuse, and bellow against him as an impudent fellow who fails in his respect to the court. It was in this manner you behaved to my first witness, whom you first provoked into a passion by injurious insinuations; then you took an advantage of the confusion which you had intailed upon him; and lastly, you insulted him as a person who had shuffled in his evidence. This might have been an irreparable injury to the character of a tradesman, had he not been luckily known to the whole jury, and many other persons in court, as a man of unquestionable probity and credit. Sir, a witness has as good a title as you have to the protection of the court; and ought to have more, because evidence is absolutely necessary for the investigation of truth; whereas the aim of a lawyer is often to involve it in doubt and obscurity. Is it for this purpose you so frequently deviate from the point, and endeavour to raise the mirth of the audience with flat jokes and insipid similes? or, have you really so miserably mistaken your own talents, as to set up for the character of a man of humour? For my own part, were I disposed to be merry, I should never desire a more pregnant subject of ridicule than your own appearance and behaviour; but, as I am at present in a very serious mood, I shall content myself with demanding adequate reparation for the injurious treatment I have received at your hands; otherwise I will in four days put this letter in the press, and you shall hear in another manner—not from a ruffian and an assassin—but from an injured gentleman, who is not ashamed of subscribing himself.

Dear Sir, Monday morning.

I AM much mortified that my rascally situation will not at present permit me to send more than the trifle inclosed, as nothing could give me more pleasure than an opportunity of shewing with how much friendship and esteem, I am, dear Sir, most faithfully, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

Dr. Isaac Schomberg to a Lady, on the Method of Reading for Female Improvement.

Madam,

CONFORMABLE to your desire, and my promise, I present you with a few thoughts

thoughts on the method of reading; which you would have had sooner, only that you gave me leave to set them down at my leisure-hours. I have complied with your request in both these particulars; so that you see, Madam, how absolute your commands are over me. If my remarks should answer your expectations, and the purpose for which they were intended; if they should in the least conduce to the spending your time in a more profitable and agreeable manner than most of your sex generally do, it will give me a pleasure equal at least to that you will receive.

It were to be wished that the female part of the human creation, on whom Nature has poured out so many charms with so lavish a hand, would pay some regard to the cultivating their minds and improving their understanding. It is easily accomplished. Would they bestow a fourth part of the time they throw away on the trifles and gewgaws of dress, in reading proper books, it would perfectly answer their purpose. Not that I am against the ladies adorning their persons; let them be set off with all the ornaments that art and nature can conspire to produce for their embellishment, but let it be with reason and good sense, not caprice and humour; for there is good sense in dress as in all things else. Strange doctrine to some! but I am sure, Madam, you know there is—You practise it.

The first rule to be laid down to any one who reads to improve, is never to read but with attention. As the abstruse parts of learning are not necessary to the accomplishment of one of your sex, a small degree of it will suffice. I would throw the subjects of which the ladies ought not to be wholly ignorant, under the following heads:

History,
Morality,
Poetry.

The first employs the memory, the second the judgment, and the third the imagination.

Whenever you undertake to read History, make a small abstract of the memorable events, and set down in what year they happened. If you entertain yourself with the life of a famous person, do the same by his most remarkable actions, with the addition of the year and the place he was born at and died. You will find these great helps to your memory, as they will lead you to remember what you do not write down, by a sort of chain that links the whole history together.

Books on Morality deserve an exact reading. There are none in our language more useful and entertaining than the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians. They are the standards of the English tongue, and as such should be read over and over again; for as we imperceptibly slide into the manners and habits of those persons with whom we most frequently converse, so reading being, as it were, a silent conversation, we insensibly write and talk in the style of the authors we have the most often read, and who have left the deepest impressions on our mind. Now, in order to retain what you read on the various subjects that fall under the head of Morality, I would advise you to mark with a pencil whatever you find worth remembering. If a passage should strike you, mark it down in the margin; if an expression, draw a line under it; if a whole paper in the fore-mentioned books, or any others which are written in the same loose and unconnected manner, make an asterisk over the first line. By these means you will select the most valuable, and they will sink deeper in your memory than the rest, on repeated reading, by being distinguished from them.

The last article is Poetry. The way of distinguishing good poetry from bad, is to turn it out of verse into prose, and see whether the thought is natural, and the words adapted to it; or whether they are not too big and sounding, or too low and mean for the sense they would convey. This rule will prevent you from being imposed on by bombast and fustian, which with many passes for sublime; for smooth verses which run off the ear with an easy cadence and harmonious turn, very often impose nonsense on the world, and are like your fine dressed beaux, who pass for fine gentlemen. Divest both from their outward ornaments, and people are surprised they could have been so easily deluded.

I have now, Madam, given a few rules, and those such only as are really necessary,

necessary. I could have added more; but these will be sufficient to enable you to read without burdening your memory, and yet with another view besides that of barely killing time, as too many are accustomed to do.

The task you have imposed on me, is a strong proof of your knowing the true value of time, and always having improved it to the best advantage, were there no other; and that there are other proofs, those who have the pleasure of being acquainted with you can tell.

As for my part, Madam, you have done me too much honour, by singling me out from all your acquaintance on this occasion, to say any thing that would not look like flattery; you yourself would think it so, were I to do you the common justice all your friends allow you; I must therefore be silent on this head, and only say, that I shall think myself well rewarded in return, if you will believe me to be, with the utmost sincerity, as I really am, Madam, your faithful humble servant.

LETTER LXXVIII.

To Colonel R——s, in Spain.

BEFORE this can reach the best of husbands and the fondest lover, those tender names will be no more of concern to me. The indisposition in which you, to obey the dictates of your honour and duty, left me, has increased upon me; and I am acquainted, by my physicians, I cannot live a week longer. At this time my spirits fail me; and it is the ardent love I have for you that carries me beyond my strength, and enables me to tell you, the most painful thing in the prospect of death is, that I must part with you; but let it be a comfort to you that I have no guilt hangs upon me, no unrepented folly that retards me; but I pass away my last hours in reflection upon the happiness we have lived in together, and in sorrow that it is so soon to have an end. This is a frailty which I hope is so far from being criminal, that methinks there is a kind of piety in being so unwilling to be separated from a state which is the institution of Heaven, and in which we have lived according to its laws. As we know no more of the next life, but that it will be a happy one to the good, and miserable to the wicked, why may we not please ourselves at least, to alleviate the difficulty of resigning this being, in imagining that we shall have a sense of what passes below, and may possibly be employed in guiding the steps of those with whom we walked with innocence when mortal? Why may I not hope to go on in my usual work, and, though unknown to you, be assistant in all the conflicts of your mind? Give me leave to say to you, O best of men! that I cannot figure to myself a greater happiness than in such an employment; to be present at all the adventures to which human life is exposed; to administer slumber to thy eye-lids in the agonies of a fever; to cover thy beloved face in the day of battle; to go with thee a guardian angel, incapable of wound or pain; where I have longed to attend thee, when a weak, a fearful woman. These, my dear, are the thoughts with which I warm my poor languid heart; but indeed I am not capable, under my present weakness, of bearing the strong agonies of mind I fall into, when I form to myself the grief you must be in upon your first hearing of my departure. I will not dwell upon this, because your kind and generous heart will be but the more afflicted, the more the person, for whom you lament, offers you consolation. My last breath will, if I am myself, expire in a prayer for you. I shall never see thy face again. Farewell for ever.

LETTER LXXIX.

John Garden to Archbishop Secker.

Brechin, April 24, 1767.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,

May it please your Grace,

I AM a layman, content with the fruit of my labour, and have nothing to ask for myself. I am a Scots Whig and a Presbyterian; not quite so rigid indeed, but I could conform to the church of England, were it by law established: but I shall never wish to see it so here: our country is too barren and poor; and from the experience I have had of the clergy here,

here, I shall never wish to see them possessed of power, the constant concomitant of great riches; so apt they are to domineer, or to side with those who are disposed to do so, when they can see their own interest in it. This I am sensible is no very plausible introduction in addressing one of your station; but plain truth tells best, and is always more prevalent than fiction.

I have lately read a book, published this year at Edinburgh, titled, Principles Political and Religious, by Mr. Norman Sievwright, minister of the authorised Episcopal congregation here, to be sold at A. Donaldson's shop, London. I am pleased with the performance; the more so, as an essay of its nature, from one of his profession in this country, would have been looked upon as quite exotic some years ago. The design is certainly laudable, to open the eyes of, and introduce loyalty among, a blind, deluded, and disaffected people; a design wherein the interest and happiness of Great Britain is not a little concerned, and of consequence worthy of your Grace's attention, whom kind Providence has placed at the head of the church of England.

I am absolutely unconnected with the author either by blood or alliance, but I know him to be a good man and a loyal subject; and that the character I give will be confirmed by every honest man that knows him; and though altogether unknown to your Grace, and even void of the improper and presumptuous ambition of being so, I have, without Mr. Sievwright's knowledge or participation, from the mere motive of public spirit, ventured to address you in this way, and under your correction, to suggest, that the countenance your Grace may be pleased to shew him, and your approbation of his design, will be a spur on him, and others, to exert themselves strenuously in the same way, and cannot miss to have a tendency to make us in this country more unanimous, if not in religious, at least in political matters; which would be no small point gained: two rebellions in my time demonstrate the truth of this. Though my acquaintance and Mr. Sievwright's is of pretty long standing, sixteen years or thereby, I was yesterday in his house for the first time; I saw his wife, a grave genteel woman big with child, and six young children, all clean and decently dressed, and every thing orderly. Mr. Sievwright was not at home. He has only forty pounds annually to support all this. Great must be the economy, considering the enormous price to which every thing has risen; for cold, I know, is the charity of the place. I never heard Mr. Sievwright complain; and I believe no man else ever did. I own I was moved at the decent solemnity which I observed; and, upon consideration, nothing could have hindered me from giving that relief which a good God and generous nature prompted, but want of ability. To whom shall I pour forth the emotions of my soul so properly on this affecting subject, as to him who, next to our amiable king, is God's vicegerent for good in the island of Britain?—— The humanity, generosity, and godlike disposition of soul, for which you are famed even in this remote corner, leaves no room to doubt, that you will unexpectedly send Mr. Sievwright that relief, which, upon due consideration, you shall find his merit deserving of, either by calling him to some small benefice in England, or otherways as to your great wisdom shall seem most meet. These prudential and charitable suggestions are submitted to you with all humility. Begging pardon for this great and uncommon piece of presumption, I have, with the most profound regard, the honour to be, my Lord, your Grace's most obedient, and most humble servant.

LETTER LXXX.

Archbishop Secker to John Garden, in answer to the above.

Sir, Lambeth, May 25, 1767.

I BEG your pardon that I have suffered your letter, in this busy time, to lie so long unanswered. And I hope the plain speaking of an English Episcopal Whig will be as acceptable to you, as that of a Scotch Presbyterian is to me. Your established church hath as much power I believe, as ours hath, or more, though less wealth. And its wealth, perhaps, is not so much less as you may imagine, allowing for the different prices of things; only with you the shares are nearly alike. I wish the incomes of your ministers were somewhat greater, and those of ours somewhat

somewhat more equally divided. I wish too that all your Episcopal clergy were friends to the government; and that all the Presbyterians were as candid as you towards such of them as are. But however vain it may be to form wishes about others, each person may endeavour to act rightly himself. My business is not to abuse either my power, by lording it over God's heritage, or my wealth to the purposes of luxury or covetousness, but to do as much good as I can with both. One part of it I am sure you have done, by recommending Mr. Sievwright to me. I have heard of a performance of his relative to the Hebrew language, for which I am inquiring. I have got his Principles, Religious and Political; a work that shews much good sense and reading, and hath given me much information concerning the state of Episcopacy in Scotland. I should be glad to see him rewarded in proportion to his merit; but one half of the preferments in my gift are no better, all things considered, than what he hath already; and there are, amongst the English clergy, thrice as many claimants, on good grounds, for the other half, as I shall live to gratify. Besides, I should do Scotland an injury by taking such a man out of it. I must therefore content myself with desiring you to put the inclosed little note into his hands, and to tell him, that if I live another year, and do not forget, which last I hope you will prevent, notice shall be taken of him again, by your friend and servant.

LETTER LXXXI.

John Garden to Archbishop Secker, in return to the above.

May it please your Grace, June 5, 1767.

I AM instantly favoured with your's of the 25th ult. and have communicated the same to Mr. Sievwright. The honour you have conferred on me by your speedy and effectual reply, though far beyond what I could have hoped for, is at present swallowed up in the more substantial joy which I feel in living in those days when one is found at the head of the church of England, who knows so well to make a proper use of that power and those riches, which Almighty Goodness, out of mercy to mankind, has been graciously pleased to bestow upon so much merit. Methinks at present I feel and fully understand what St. Paul meant, when he said, "that for a good man one "would even dare to die." What Mr. Sievwright's feelings are, your Grace will best understand from himself, for he also is to write you. Sure I am I surprised him. From the experience I have of him, I have reason to think, that the more your Grace knows of him, the better you will be pleased with him, and the less you'll think your favours misapplied. He is a man of learning, and one whose walk and conversation seem worthy of his calling. He has now got the seventh child, and the wife is presently on the straw, so that the ten pound note came seasonably. May those sensations that a good man feels upon doing a generous action, be your Grace's constant attendant; in one word, may God bless you, and preserve you long to bless others! With the greatest regard and affection, I am your Grace's, &c.

LETTER LXXXII.

Archbishop Secker to a Clergyman who applied to him for Advice on his Son's becoming a Calvinist.

I AM very sorry that your son hath given you cause of uneasiness. But as a zeal of God, though in part not according to knowledge, influences him, his present state is far better than that of a profane or vicious person; and there is ground to hope, that through the divine blessing on your mild instructions and affectionate expostulations, he may be gradually brought into a temper every way Christian. Perhaps you and he differ, even now, less than you imagine: for I have observed, that the Methodists and their opposers are apt to think too ill of each other's notions. Our clergy have dwelt too much upon mere morality, and too little on the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel: and hence they have been charged with being more deficient in this last respect than they are; and even with disbelieving, or however slighting, the principal points of revelation. They in their turns have reproached their accusers with enthusiastic imaginations, irrational tenets, and disregard

regard to the common social duties, of which many of them perhaps are little if at all guilty. Who the Author of the Address to the Clergy*, &c. is, I am totally ignorant; he seems a pious and well-meaning man, but grievously uncharitable in relation to the clergy, without perceiving it, and a little tinctured with Antinomianism—I hope without being hurt by it himself. God grant that nothing which he hath written may hurt others! As Mr. P—— mentions Mr. B——t to your son, I send you some letters relative to him, which will shew you more fully my way of thinking about Methodists, and persons considered as a-kin to them: you will be pleased to return them. For the same purpose I add a copy of an unpublished, though printed, Charge, which you may keep as a present from your loving brother, &c.

Since Mr. B——t left my diocese, I have never heard of him till now.

* This was a pamphlet entitled, "An Address "to the Clergy, concerning their Departure from "the Doctrines of Reformation," dedicated to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. By a Member of the Established Church, 8vo. 1767.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

NARRATIVE, RECENT, AND MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION III.

FROM THE LETTERS OF LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE, LORD CHESTERFIELD, Dr. JOHNSON, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of—

Rotterdam, Aug. 3, O. S. 1716.

I FLATTER myself (dear sister) that I shall give you some pleasure in letting you know that I have safely passed the sea, though we had the ill fortune of a storm. We were persuaded by the captain of the yacht to set out in a calm, and he pretended there was nothing so easy as to ride it over; but, after two days slowly moving, the wind blew so hard, that none of the sailors could keep their feet, and we were all Sunday night tossed very handsomely. I never saw a man more frighted than the captain. For my part, I have been so lucky neither to suffer from fear nor sea-sickness; though, I confess, I was so impatient to see myself once more upon dry land, that I would not stay till the yacht could get to Rotterdam, but went in the long-boat to Helvoetsluys, where we had voitures to carry us to the Briel. I was charmed with the neatness of that little town; but my arrival at Rotterdam, presented me a new scene of pleasure. All the streets are paved with broad stones, and before many of the meanest artificers doors are placed seats of various-coloured marbles, so neatly kept, that I'll assure you, I walked almost all over the town yesterday, *incognito*, in my slippers, without receiving one spot of dirt; and you may see the Dutch maids washing the pavement of the street, with more application than ours do our bed-chambers. The town seems so full of people, with such busy faces all in motion, that I can hardly fancy it is not some celebrated fair; but I see it is every day the same. It is certain no town can be more advantageously situated for commerce. Here are seven large canals, on which the merchants ships come up to the very doors of their houses. The shops and warehouses are of a surprising neatness and magnificence, filled with an incredible quantity of fine merchandize, and so much cheaper than what we see in England, that I have much ado to persuade myself I am still so near it. Here is neither dirt nor beggary to be seen. One is not shocked with those loathsome cripples, so common in London, nor teazed with the importunity of idle fellows and wenches, that choose to be nasty and lazy. The common servants and little shop-women here, are more nicely clean than most of our ladies, and the great variety of neat dresses (every woman dressing her head after her own fashion) is an additional pleasure in seeing the town. You see, hitherto, I make no complaints, dear sister, and if I continue to like travelling as well as I do at present, I shall not repent my project. It will go a great way in making me satisfied with it, if it affords mean opportunity of entertaining you. But it is not from Holland that you must expect a disinterested offer. I can write enough, in the style of Rotterdam, to tell you plainly, in one word, that I expect returns of all the London news. You see I have already learnt to make a good bargain, and that it is not for nothing I will so much as tell you I am your affectionate sister.

LETTER II.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. S——.

Hague, Aug. 5, O. S. 1716.

I MAKE haste to tell you, dear Madam, that after all the dreadful fatigues you threatened me with, I am hitherto very well pleased with my journey. We take care to make such short stages every day, that I rather fancy myself upon parties of pleasure, than upon the road, and sure nothing can be more agreeable than travelling in Holland. The whole country appears a large garden; the roads as well paved, shaded on each side with rows of trees, and bordered with large canals, full of boats passing and repassing. Every twenty paces gives you the prospect of some villa, and every four hours, that of a large town, so surprisingly neat, I am sure you would be charmed with them. The place I am now at, is certainly one of the finest villages in the world. Here are several squares finely built, and (what I think a particular beauty) the whole set with thick large trees. The *Voor-hout* is, at the same time, the Hyde Park and Mall of the people of quality; for they take the air in it both on foot and in coaches. There are shops for waters, cool liquors, &c. I have been to see several of the most celebrated gardens, but I will not tease you with their descriptions. I dare swear you think my letter already long enough. But I must not conclude without begging your pardon, for not obeying your commands, in sending the lace you ordered me. Upon my word, I can yet find none, that is not dearer than you may buy it in London. If you want any India goods, here are great variety of pennyworths, and I shall follow your orders with great pleasure and exactness, being, dear Madam, &c. &c.

LETTER III.

The same to Mrs. S. C.

Nimeguen, Aug. 13, O. S. 1716.

I AM extremely sorry, my dear S. that your fears of disobliging your relations, and their fears for your health and safety, have hindered me from enjoying the happiness of your company, and you the pleasure of a diverting journey. I receive some degree of mortification from every agreeable novelty, or pleasing prospect, by the reflection of your having so unluckily missed the delight which I know it would have given you. If you were with me in this town, you would be ready to expect to receive visits from your Nottingham friends. No two places were ever more resembling; one has but to give the Maese the name of the Trent, and there is no distinguishing the prospect. The houses, like those of Nottingham, are built one above another, and are intermixed, in the same manner, with trees and gardens. The Tower, they call Julius Cæsar's, has the same situation with Nottingham Castle; and I cannot help fancying I see from it the Trent-field, Adboulton, places so well known to us. It is true, the fortifications make a considerable difference. All the learned in the art of war, bestow great commendations on them; for my part, that know nothing of the matter, I shall content myself with telling you, it is a very pretty walk on the ramparts, on which there is a tower, very deservedly called the Belvidere, where people go to drink coffee, tea, &c. and enjoy one of the finest prospects in the world. The public walks have no great beauty, but the thick shade of the trees, which is solemnly delightful. But I must not forget to take notice of the bridge, which appeared very surprising to me. It is large enough to hold hundreds of men, with horses and carriages. They give the value of an English two-pence to get upon it, and then away they go, bridge and all, to the other side of the river, with so slow a motion, one is hardly sensible of any at all. I was yesterday at the French church, and stared very much at their manner of service. The parson clapped on a broad brimmed hat in the first place, which gave him entirely the air of, what d'ye call him, in Bartholomew fair, which he kept up by extraordinary antic gestures, and preaching much such stuff, as t'other talked to the puppets. However, the congregation seemed to receive it with great devotion; and I was informed, by some of his flock, that he is a person of particular fame amongst them. I believe by this time you are as much tired with my account of him, as I was with his sermon; but I am sure your brother will excuse a digression in favour of the church of England.

You

You know, speaking disrespectfully of the Calvinists, is the same thing as speaking honourably of the church. Adieu, my dear S. always remember me, and be assured I can never forget you,&c. &c.

LETTER IV.

The same to the Lady ——.

Cologne, Aug. 16, O. S. 1716.

If my lady ——— could have any notion of the fatigues that I have suffered these two last days, I am sure she would own it a great proof of regard that I now sit down to write to her. We hired horses from Nimeguen hither, not having the conveniency of the post, and found but very indifferent accommodations at Reinberg, our first stage; but it was nothing to what I suffered yesterday. We were in hopes to reach Cologne; our horses tired at Stamel, three hours from it, where I was forced to pass the night in my clothes, in a room not at all better than a hovel; for though I have my bed with me, I had no mind to undress where the wind came from a thousand places. We left this wretched lodging at day-break, and about six, this morning, came safe here, where I got immediately into bed. I slept so well for three hours, that I found myself perfectly recovered, and have had spirits enough to go and see all that is curious in the town, that is to say, the churches, for here is nothing else worth seeing. This is a very large town, but the most part of it is old built. The Jesuits church, which is the neatest, was shewed me, in a very complaisant manner, by a handsome young Jesuit; who not knowing who I was, took a liberty in his compliments and railleries, which very much diverted me, having never before seen any thing of that nature. I could not enough admire the magnificence of the altars, the rich images of the saints (all massy silver), and the enchasures of the relics, though I could not help murmuring, in my heart, at the profusion of pearls, diamonds, and rubies, bestowed on the adornment of rotten teeth and dirty rags. I own that I had wickedness enough to covet St. Ursula's pearl necklace; though perhaps this was no wickedness at all, an image not being certainly one's neighbour; but I went yet farther, and wished the wench herself converted into dressing-plate. I should also gladly see converted into silver, a great St. Christopher, which I imagine would look very well in a cistern. These were my pious reflections; though I was very well satisfied to see, piled up to the honour of our nation, the skulls of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. I have seen some hundreds of relics here of no less consequence; but I will not imitate the common style of travellers so far as to give you a list of them, being persuaded that you have no manner of curiosity for the titles given to jaw bones and bits of worm-eaten wood.—Adieu, I am just going to supper, where I shall drink your health in an admirable sort of Lorrain wine, which I am sure is the same you call Burgundy in London, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

The same to the Countess of B—.

Nuremburg, Aug. 22, O. S. 1716.

After five days travelling post, I could not sit down to write on any other occasion than to tell my dear Lady, that I have not forgot her obliging command of sending her some account of my travels. I have already passed a large part of Germany; I have seen all that is remarkable in Cologne, Frankfort, Wurtsburg, and this place. It is impossible not to observe the difference between the free towns, and those under the government of absolute princes, as all the little sovereigns of Germany are. In the first there appears an air of commerce and plenty. The streets are well built and full of people, neatly and plainly dressed. The shops are loaded with merchandize, and the commonalty are clean and cheerful. In the other you see a sort of shabby finery, a number of dirty people of quality tawdered out; narrow nasty streets out of repair, wretchedly thin of inhabitants, and above half of the common sort asking alms. I cannot help fancying one, under the figure of a clean Dutch citizen's wife, and the other like a poor town lady of pleasure, painted, and ribboned out in her head-dress, with tarnished silver-laced shoes, a ragged under-petticoat, a miserable mixture of vice and poverty.—They have sumptuary laws in this town, which distinguish their rank by their

dress, prevent the excess which ruins so many other cities, and has a more agreeable effect to the eye of a stranger, than our fashions. I need not be ashamed to own, that I wish these laws were in force in other parts of the world. When one considers impartially, the merit of a rich suit of clothes in most places, the respect and the smiles of favour it procures, not to speak of the envy and the sighs it occasions (which is very often the principal charm to the wearer), one is forced to confess, that there is need of an uncommon understanding to resist the temptation of pleasing friends and mortifying rivals; and that it is natural to young people to fall into a folly, which betrays them to that want of money, which is the source of a thousand basenesses. What numbers of men have begun the world with generous inclinations, that have afterwards been the instruments of bringing misery on a whole people, being led by a vain expence into debts that they could clear no other way but by the forfeit of their honour, and which they never could have contracted, if the respect the multitude pays to habits, was fixed by law, only to a particular colour or cut of plain cloth. These reflections draw after them others that are too melancholy. I will make haste to put them out of your head by the farce of relics, with which I have been entertained in all Romish churches.

The Lutherans are not quite free from these follies. I have seen here, in the principal church, a large piece of the cross set in jewels, and the point of the spear, which, they told me, very gravely, was the same that pierced the side of our Saviour. But I was particularly diverted in a little Roman catholic church which is permitted here, where the professors of that religion are not very rich, and consequently cannot adorn their images in so rich a manner as their neighbours. For not to be quite destitute of all finery, they have dressed up an image of our Saviour over the altar, in a fair full-bottomed wig, very well powdered. I imagine I see your ladyship stare at this article, of which you very much doubt the veracity; but, upon my word, I have not yet made use of the privilege of a traveller, and my whole account is written with the same plain sincerity of heart, with which I assure you that I am, dear Madam, your, &c. &c.

LETTER VI.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mrs. P——.

Ratisbon, Aug. 30, O. S. 1716.

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours but the day before I left London. I give you a thousand thanks for your good wishes, and have such an opinion of their efficacy, that, I am persuaded, I owe, in part, to them the good luck of having proceeded so far on my long journey without any ill accident. For I do not reckon it any to have been stopped a few days in this town by a cold, since it has not only given me an opportunity of seeing all that is curious in it, but of making some acquaintance with the ladies, who have all been to see me with great civility, particularly Madame ———, the wife of our King's envoy from Hanover. She has carried me to all the assemblies, and I have been magnificently entertained at her house, which is one of the finest here. You know that all the nobility of this place are envoys from different States. Here are a great number of them, and they might pass their time agreeably enough, if they were less delicate on the point of ceremony. But instead of joining in the design of making the town as pleasant to one another as they can, and improving their little societies, they amuse themselves no other way than with perpetual quarrels, which they take care to eternise, by leaving them to their successors; and an envoy to Ratisbon receives, regularly, half a dozen quarrels, among the perquisites of his employment. You may be sure the ladies are not wanting, on their side, in cherishing and improving these important piques, which divide the town almost into as many parties as there are families. They choose rather to suffer the mortification of sitting almost alone on their assembly nights, than to recede one jot from their pretensions. I have not been here above a week, and yet I have heard from almost every one of them, the whole history of their wrongs, and dreadful complaints of the injustice of their neighbours, in hopes to draw me to their party. But I think it very prudent to remain neuter, though if I was to stay amongst them, there would be no possibility of continuing so, their quarrels running so high, that they will not be civil to those that visit their adversaries.

The

The foundation of these everlasting disputes turns entirely upon rank, place, and the title of Excellency, which they all pretend to, and, what is very hard, will give it to nobody. For my part, I could not forbear advertising them (for the public good) to give the title of Excellency to every body, which would include the receiving it from every body; but the very mention of such a dishonourable peace was received with as much indignation as Mrs. Blackaire did the motion of a reference. And, indeed, I began to think myself ill-natured, to offer to take from them, in a town where there are so few diversions, so entertaining an amusement. I know that my peaceable disposition already gives me a very ill figure, and that it is publicly whispered as a piece of impertinent pride in me, that I have hitherto been saucily civil to every body, as if I thought nobody good enough to quarrel with. I should be obliged to change my behaviour, if I did not intend to pursue my journey in a few days. I have been to see the churches here, and had the permission of touching the relics, which was never suffered in places where I was not known. I had, by this privilege, the opportunity of making an observation which I doubt not might have been made in all the other churches, that the emeralds and rubies which they shew round their relics and images are most of them false; though they tell you that many of the crosses and madonas, set round with these stones, have been the gifts of emperors and other great princes. I do not doubt indeed but they were at first jewels of value; but the good fathers have found it convenient to apply them to other uses, and the people are just as well satisfied with bits of glass amongst these relics. They shewed me a prodigious claw set in gold, which they called the claw of a griffin, and I could not forbear asking the reverend priest that shewed it, whether the griffin was a saint? The question almost put him beside his gravity; but he answered, they only kept it as a curiosity. I was very much scandalized at a large silver image of the Trinity, where the Father is represented under the figure of a decrepit old man, with a beard down to his knees, and triple crown on his head, holding in his arms the Son, fixed on the Cross, and the Holy Ghost, in the shape of a dove, hovering over him. Madame ——— is come this minute to call me to the assembly, and forces me to tell you very abruptly, that I am ever your, &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

The same to the Countess of ———.

Vienna, Sept. 8, O. S. 1716.

I AM now, my dear sister, safely arrived at Vienna, and, I thank God, have not at all suffered in my health, nor (what is dearer to me) in that of my child, by all our fatigues. We travelled by water from Ratisbon, a journey perfectly agreeable, down the Danube, in one of those little vessels, that they, very properly, call wooden houses, having in them all the conveniences of a palace, stoves in the chambers, kitchens, &c. They are rowed by twelve men each, and move with such an incredible swiftness, that in the same day you have the pleasure of a vast variety of prospects, and within the space of a few hours you have the pleasure of seeing a populous city, adorned with magnificent palaces, and the most romantic solitudes, which appear distant from the commerce of mankind, the banks of the Danube being charmingly diversified with woods, rocks, mountains covered with vines, fields of corn, large cities, and ruins of ancient castles. I saw the great towns of Passau and Lintz, famous for the retreat of the Imperial Court, when Vienna was besieged. This town, which has the honour of being the emperor's residence, did not at all answer my expectation, nor ideas of it, being much less than I expected to find it; the streets are very close, and so narrow, one cannot observe the fine fronts of the palaces, though many of them very well deserve observation, being truly magnificent. They are all built of fine white stone, and are excessive high. For as the town is too little for the number of the people that desire to live in it, the builders seem to have projected to repair that misfortune, by clapping one town on the top of another, most of the houses being of five, and some of them of six stories. You may easily imagine that, the streets being so narrow, the rooms are extremely dark, and, what is an inconveniency much more intolerable in my opinion, there is no house has so few as five or six families in it. The apartments of the greatest ladies, and even of the ministers of state, are divided,

but by a partition, from that of a taylor or shoe-maker, and I know nobody that has above two floors in any house, one for their own use, and one higher for their servants. Those that have houses of their own, let out the rest of them to whoever will take them, and thus the great stairs (which are all of stone) are as common and as dirty as the street. It is true, when you have once travelled through them, nothing can be more surprisingly magnificent than the apartments. They are commonly a *suite* of eight or ten large rooms, all inlaid, the doors and windows richly carved and gilt, and the furniture such as is seldom seen in the palaces of sovereign princes in other countries. Their apartments are adorned with hangings of the finest tapestry of Brussels, prodigious large looking-glasses in silver frames, fine japan tables, beds, chairs, canopies and window curtains of the richest Genoa damask or velvet, almost covered with gold lace or embroidery. All this is made gay by pictures and vast jars of japan china, and large lustres of rock crystal. I have already had the honour of being invited to dinner by several of the first people of quality, and I must do them the justice to say, the good taste and magnificence of their tables very well answer to that of their furniture. I have been more than once entertained with fifty dishes of meat, all served in silver, and well dressed; the dessert proportionable, served in the finest china. But the variety and richness of their wines, is what appears the most surprising. The constant way is, to lay a list of their names upon the plates of the guests along with the napkins, and I have counted several times, to the number of eighteen different sorts, all exquisite in their kinds. I was yesterday at Count Schoonbourn, the vice-chancellor's garden, where I was invited to dinner. I must own, I never saw a place so perfectly delightful as the Fauxbourg of Vienna. It is very large, and almost wholly composed of delicious palaces. If the emperor found it proper to permit the gates of the town to be laid open, that the Fauxbourgs might be joined to it, he would have one of the largest and best-built cities in Europe. Count Schoonbourn's villa is one of the most magnificent; the furniture all rich brocades, so well fancied and fitted up, nothing can look more gay and splendid; not to speak of a gallery, full of rarities of coral, mother-of-pearl, and throughout the whole house a profusion of gilding, carving, fine paintings, the most beautiful porcelain, statues of alabaster and ivory, and vast orange and lemon trees in gilt pots. The dinner was perfectly fine and well ordered, and made still more agreeable by the good humour of the Count. I have not yet been at court, being forced to stay for my gown, without which there is no waiting on the empress; though I am not without great impatience to see a beauty that has been the admiration of so many different nations. When I have had the honour, I will not fail to let you know my real thoughts, always taking a particular pleasure in communicating them to my dear sister.

LETTER VIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. P——.

Vienna, Sept. 14, O. S.

PERHAPS you will laugh at me, for thanking you very gravely for all the obliging concern you express for me. It is certain that I may, if I please, take the fine things you say to me for wit and raillery, and, it may be, it would be taking them right. But I never, in my life, was half so well disposed to take you in earnest as I am at present, and that distance which makes the continuation of your friendship improbable, has very much increased my faith in it. I find that I have (as well as the rest of my sex), whatever face I set on it, a strong disposition to believe in miracles. Do not fancy, however, that I am infected by the air of these popish countries; I have, indeed, so far wandered from the discipline of the church of England, as to have been last Sunday at the opera, which was performed in the garden of the Favorita, and I was so much pleased with it, I have not yet repented my seeing it. Nothing of that kind ever was more magnificent; and I can easily believe, what I am told, that the decorations and habits cost the emperor thirty thousand pounds sterling. The stage was built over a very large canal, and at the beginning of the second act, divided into two parts, discovering the water, on which there immediately came, from different parts, two fleets of little gilded vessels, that gave the representation of a naval fight. It is not easy to imagine the beauty of this scene, which I took

I took particular notice of. But all the rest were perfectly fine in their kind. The story of the opera is the enchantment of Alcina, which gives opportunities for great variety of machines and changes of the scenes, which are performed with a surprising swiftness. The theatre is so large that it is hard to carry the eye to the end of it, and the habits in the utmost magnificence, to the number of one hundred and eight. No house can hold such large decorations; but the ladies all sitting in the open air, exposes them to great inconveniences; for there is but one canopy for the imperial family; and the first night it was represented, a shower of rain happening, the opera was broke off, and the company crowded away in such confusion, that I was almost squeezed to death. But if their operas are thus delightful, their comedies are, in as high a degree, ridiculous. They have but one play-house, where I had the curiosity to go to a German comedy, and was very glad it happened to be the story of Amphitrion. As that subject has been already handled by a Latin, French, and English poet, I was curious to see what an Austrian author would make of it. I understand enough of that language to comprehend the greatest part of it, and besides I took with me a lady that had the goodness to explain to me every word. The way is to take a box, which holds four, for yourself and company. The fixed price is a gold ducat. I thought the house very low and dark; but I confess the comedy admirably recompensed that defect. I never laughed so much in my life. It begun with Jupiter's falling in love out of a peep-hole in the clouds, and ended with the birth of Hercules. But what was most pleasant was, the use Jupiter made of his metamorphosis, for you no sooner saw him under the figure of Amphitrion, but instead of flying to Alcmena, with the raptures Mr. Dryden puts into his mouth, he sends for Amphitrion's taylor, and cheats him of a laced coat, and his banker of a bag of money, a Jew of a diamond ring, and bespeaks a great supper in his name; and the greatest part of the comedy turns upon poor Amphitrion's being tormented by these people for their debts. Mercury uses Sosia in the same manner. But I could not easily pardon the liberty the poet has taken of larding his play with, not only indecent expressions, but such gross words as I do not think our mob would suffer from a mountebank. Besides, the two Sosias very fairly let down their breeches in the direct view of the boxes, which were full of people of the first rank, that seemed very well pleased with their entertainment, and assured me this was a celebrated piece. I shall conclude my letter with this remarkable relation, very well worthy the serious consideration of Mr. Collier. I will not trouble you with farewell compliments, which I think generally as impertinent as curtsies at leaving a room when the visit has been too long already.

LETTER IX.

The same to the Countess of ——.

Vienna, Sept. 14, O. S.

THOUGH I have so lately troubled you, my dear sister, with a long letter, yet I will keep my promise in giving you an account of my first going to court. In order to that ceremony, I was squeezed up in a gown, and adorned with a gorget, and the other implements thereunto belonging, a dress very inconvenient, but which certainly shews the neck and shape to great advantage. I cannot forbear giving you some description of the fashions here, which are more monstrous and contrary to all common sense and reason than it is possible for you to imagine. They build certain fabrics of gauze on their heads, about a yard high, consisting of three or four stories fortified with numberless yards of heavy ribbon. The foundation of this structure is a thing they call a *lourlé*, which is exactly of the same shape and kind, but about four times as big as those rolls our prudent milk-maids make use of to fix their pails upon. This machine they cover with their own hair, which they mix with a great deal of false, it being a particular beauty to have their heads too large to go into a moderate tub. Their hair is prodigiously powdered to conceal the mixture, and set out with three or four rows of bodkins (wonderfully large, that stick out two or three inches from their hair) made of diamonds, pearls, red, green and yellow stones, that it certainly requires as much art and experience to carry the load upright, as to dance upon May-day with the garland. Their whalebone petticoats outdo ours by several yards circumference, and cover some

acres of ground. You may easily suppose how this extraordinary dress sets off and improves the natural ugliness, with which God Almighty has been pleased to endow them, generally speaking. Even the lovely empress herself is obliged to comply, in some degree, with these absurd fashions, which they would not quit for all the world. I had a private audience (according to ceremony) of half an hour, and then all the other ladies were permitted to come and make their court. I was perfectly charmed with the empress; I cannot however tell you that her features are regular; her eyes are not large, but have a lively look full of sweetness; her complexion the finest I ever saw; her nose and forehead well made, but her mouth has ten thousand charms, that touch the soul. When she smiles, it is with a beauty and sweetness, that forces adoration. She has a vast quantity of fine fair hair; but then her person!—one must speak of it poetically to do it rigid justice; all that the poets have said of the mien of Juno, the air of Venus, come not up to the truth. The Graces move with her; the famous statue of Medicis was not formed with more delicate proportions: nothing can be added to the beauty of her neck and hands. Till I saw them, I did not believe there were any in nature so perfect, and I was almost sorry that my rank here did not permit me to kiss them; but they are kissed sufficiently, for every body that waits on her pays that homage at their entrance, and when they take leave. When the ladies were come, she sat down to quinze. I could not play at a game I had never seen before, and she ordered me a seat at her right hand, and had the goodness to talk to me very much, with that grace so natural to her. I expected every moment when the men were to come in to pay their court; but this drawing-room is very different from that of England; no man enters it but the grand-master, who comes in to advertise the empress of the approach of the emperor. His Imperial Majesty did me the honour of speaking to me in a very obliging manner, but he never speaks to any of the other ladies, and the whole passes with a gravity and air of ceremony that has something very formal in it. The empress Amelia, dowager of the late emperor Joseph, came this evening to wait on the reigning empress, followed by the two arch-duchesses her daughters, who are very agreeable young princesses. Their Imperial Majesties rose and went to meet her at the door of the room, after which she was seated in an armed chair next the empress, and in the same manner at supper, and there the men had the permission of paying their court. The arch-duchesses sat on chairs with backs without arms. The table was entirely served, and all the dishes set on by the empress's maids of honour, which are twelve young ladies of the first quality. They have no salary but their chamber at court, where they live in a sort of confinement, not being suffered to go to the assemblies or public places in town, except in compliment to the wedding of a sister maid, whom the empress always presents with her picture set in diamonds. The three first of them are called Ladies of the Key, and wear gold keys by their sides; but what I find most pleasant, is the custom, which obliges them as long as they live, after they have left the empress's service, to make her some present every year on the day of her feast. Her Majesty is served by no married women but the *Grande Maitresse*, who is generally a widow of the first quality, always very old, and is at the same time groom of the stole and mother of the maids. The dressers are not at all in the figure they pretend to in England, being looked upon no otherwise than as downright chambermaids. I had an audience next day of the empress mother, a princess of great virtue and goodness, but who piques herself too much on a violent devotion. She is perpetually performing extraordinary acts of penance, without having ever done any thing to deserve them. She has the same number of maids of honour, whom she suffers to go in colours; but she herself never quits her mourning; and sure nothing can be more dismal than the mourning here, even for a brother. There is not the least bit of linen to be seen; all black crape instead of it. The neck, ears and side of the face are covered with a plaited piece of the same stuff, and the face, that peeps out in the midst of it, looks as if it were pilloried. The widows wear, over and above, a crape forehead cloth, and in this solemn weed, go to all the public places of diversion without scruple. The next day I was to wait on the empress Amelia, who is now at her palace of retirement, half a mile from the

the town. I had there the pleasure of seeing a diversion wholly new to me, but which is the common amusement of this court. The empress herself was seated on a little throne at the end of the fine alley in her garden, and on each side of her were ranged two parties of her ladies of quality, headed by two young arch-duchesses, all dressed in their hair, full of jewels, with fine light guns in their hands, and at proper distances were placed three oval pictures, which were the marks to be shot at. The first was that of a Cupid, filling a bumper of Burgundy, and the motto, "'Tis easy to be valiant here." The second a Fortune holding a garland in her hand, the motto, "For her "whom Fortune favours." The third was a sword with a laurel wreath on the point, the motto, "Here is no shame to "the vanquished." Near the empress was a gilded trophy wreathed, with flowers, and made of little crooks, on which were hung rich Turkish handkerchiefs, tippets, ribbons, laces, &c. for the small prizes. The empress gave the first with her own hand, which was a fine ruby ring set round with diamonds in a gold snuff-box. There was for the second, a little Cupid set with brilliants, and besides these a set of fine china for the tea table, enchased in gold, japan trunks, fans, and many gallantries of the same nature. All the men of quality at Vienna were spectators; but the ladies only had permission to shoot, and the arch-duchess Amelia carried off the first prize. I was very well pleased with having seen this entertainment, and do not know but it might make as good a figure as the prize-shooting in the Æneid, if I could write as well as Virgil. This is the favourite pleasure of the emperor, and there is rarely a week without some feast of this kind, which makes the young ladies skilful enough to defend a fort. They laughed very much to see me afraid to handle a gun. My dear sister, you will easily pardon an abrupt conclusion. I believe by this time you are ready to think I shall never conclude at all.

LETTER X.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady R—.

Vienna, Sept. 20, 1716, O. S.

I AM extremely rejoiced, but not all all surprized, at the long, delightful letter you have had the goodness to send me. I know that you can think of an absent friend even in the midst of a court, and you love to oblige, where you can have no view of a return, and I expect from you that you should love me, and think of me, when you do not see me. I have compassion for the mortifications, that you tell me befal our little, old friend, and I pity her much more, since I know, that they are, only, owing to the barbarous customs of our country. Upon my word, if she were here, she would have no other fault but that of being something too young for the fashion, and she has nothing to do but to transplant herself hither about seven years hence, to be again a young and blooming beauty. I can assure you that wrinkles, or a small stoop in the shoulders, nay even grey hairs, are no objection to the making new conquests. I know you cannot easily figure to yourself, a young fellow of five-and-twenty, ogling my La y S-ff—k with passion, or pressing to hand the Countess of O———d from an opera. But such are the sights I see every day, and I do not perceive any body surprized at them but myself. A woman till five-and-thirty, is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I do not know what your ladyship may think of this matter, but it is a considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women, and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear no where else. I cannot help lamenting on this occasion, the pitiful case of too many English ladies, long since retired to prudery and ratafia, whom if their stars had luckily conducted hither, would still shine in the first rank of beauties.

LETTER XI.

The same to Mrs. J * *.*

Vienna, Sept. 26, O. S. 1716.

I WAS never more agreeably surprized than by your obliging letter. It is a peculiar mark of my esteem, that I tell you so, and I can assure you, that if I loved you one grain less than I do, I should be very sorry to see it so diverting as it is. The mortal aversion I have to writing makes me tremble at the thoughts of

of a new correspondent, and I believe I disobliged no less than a dozen of my London acquaintance by refusing to hear from them, though I did verily think they intended to send me very entertaining letters. But I had rather lose the pleasure of reading several witty things, than be forced to write many stupid ones. Yet in spite of these considerations, I am charmed with the proof of your friendship, and beg a continuation of the same goodness, though I fear the dulness of this will make you immediately repent of it. It is not from Austria that one can write with vivacity, and I am already infected with the phlegm of the country. Even their amours and their quarrels are carried on with a surprising temper, and they are never lively, but upon points of ceremony. There I own, they shew all their passions, and it is not long since two coaches meeting in a narrow street at night, the ladies in them not being able to adjust the ceremonial of which should go back, sat there with equal gallantry till two in the morning, and were both so fully determined to die upon the spot rather than yield, in a point of that importance, that the street would never have been cleared till their deaths, if the emperor had not sent his guards to part them, and even then they refused to stir, till the expedient could be found out, of taking them both out in chairs, exactly in the same moment. After the ladies were agreed, it was with some difficulty that the pas was decided between the two coachmen, no less tenacious of their rank than the ladies. This passion is so omnipotent in the breasts of the women, that even their husbands never die, but they are ready to break their hearts, because, that fatal hour puts an end to their rank, no widows having any place at Vienna. The men are not much less touched with this point of honour, and they do not only scorn to marry, but even to make love to any woman of a family not as illustrious as their own, and the pedigree is much more considered by them, than either the complexion or features of their mistresses. Happy are the she's that can number amongst their ancestors, Counts of the Empire; they have neither occasion for beauty, money, nor good conduct to get them husbands. It is true as to money, it is seldom any advantage to the man they marry; the laws of Austria confine the woman's portion to two thousand florins (about two hundred pounds English), and whatever they have beside, remains in their own possession and disposal. Thus here are many ladies much richer than their husbands, who are however obliged to allow them pin-money agreeable to their quality; and I attribute to this considerable branch of prerogative, the liberty that they take upon other occasions. I am sure you, that know my laziness and extreme indifference on this subject, will pity me, entangled amongst all these ceremonies, which are a wonderful burthen to me, though I am the envy of the whole town, having by their own customs the pas before them all. They, indeed, so revenge upon the poor envoys this great respect shewn to ambassadors, that (with all my indifference) I should be very uneasy to suffer it. Upon days of ceremony they have no entrance at court, and on other days must content themselves with walking after every soul, and being the very last taken notice of. But I must write a volume to let you know all the ceremonies, and I have already said too much on so dull a subject, which however employs the whole care of the people here. I need not, after this, tell you how agreeably time slides away with me; you know as well as I do the taste of yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XII.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Lady X—.

Vienna, Oct. 1, O. S. 1716.

You desire me, Madam, to send you some account of the customs here, and at the same time a description of Vienna. I am always willing to obey your commands, but you must, upon this occasion, take the will for the deed. If I should undertake to tell you all the particulars, in which the manners here differ from ours, I must write a whole quire of the dullest stuff that ever was read, or printed without being read. Their dress agrees with the French or English in no one article, but wearing petticoats. They have many fashions peculiar to themselves; they think it indecent for a widow ever to wear green or rose colour, but all the other gayest colours at her own discretion. The assemblies here are the only regular diversion, the operas being always at court, and

and commonly on some particular occasion. Madam Rabutin has the assembly constantly every night at her house; and the other ladies, whenever they have a mind to display the magnificence of their apartments, or oblige a friend by complimenting them on the day of their saint, they declare, that on such a day the assembly shall be at their house in honour of the feast of the Count or Countess—such a one. These days are called days of Gala, and all the friends or relations of the lady, whose saint it is, are obliged to appear in their best clothes and all their jewels. The mistress of the house takes no particular notice of any body, nor returns any body's visit; and, whoever pleases, may go, without the formality of being presented. The company are entertained with ice in several forms, winter and summer; afterwards they divide into several parties of ombre, piquet, or conversation, all games of hazard being forbid.

I saw the other day the Gala for Count Altheim, the Emperor's favourite, and never in my life saw so many fine clothes ill fancied. They embroider the richest gold stuffs, and provided they can make their clothes expensive enough, that is all the taste they shew in them. On other days the general dress is a scarf, and what you please under it.

But now I am speaking of Vienna, I am sure you should expect I should say something of the convents; they are of all sorts and sizes, but I am best pleased with that of St. Lawrence, where the ease and neatness they seem to live with, appear to me much more edifying than those stricter orders, where perpetual penance and nastinesses must breed discontent and wretchedness. The nuns are all of quality. I think there are to the number of fifty. They have each of them a little cell, perfectly clean, the walls of which are covered with pictures, more or less fine, according to their quality. A long white stone gallery runs by all of them, furnished with the pictures of exemplary sisters; the chapel is extremely neat and richly adorned. But I could not forbear laughing at their shewing me a wooden head of our Saviour, which they assured me, spoke, during the siege of Vienna; and, as a proof of it, bid me remark his mouth, which had been open ever since. Nothing can be more becoming than the dress of these nuns. It is a white robe, the sleeves of which are turned up with fine white calico, and their head-dress the same, excepting a small veil of black crape that falls behind. They have a lower sort of serving nuns, that wait on them as their chamber-maids. They receive all visits of women, and play at ombre in their chambers, with permission of their Abbess, which is very easy to be obtained. I never saw an old woman so good-natured; she is near fourscore, and yet shews very little sign of decay, being still lively and cheerful. She caressed me as if I had been her daughter, giving me some pretty things of her own work, and sweetmeats in abundance. The grate is not one of the most rigid; it is not very hard to put a head through; and I do not doubt but a man, a little more slender than ordinary, might squeeze in his whole person. The young Count of Salamis came to the grate, while I was there, and the Abbess gave him her hand to kiss. But I was surprised to find here, the only beautiful young woman I have seen at Vienna, and not only beautiful, but genteel, witty, and agreeable, of a great family, and who had been the admiration of the town. I could not forbear shewing my surprise at seeing a nun like her. She made me a thousand obliging compliments, and desired me to come often. It will be an infinite pleasure to me (said she, sighing); but I avoid, with the greatest care, seeing any of my former acquaintance, and whenever they come to our convent, I lock myself in my cell. I observed tears come into her eyes, which touched me extremely, and I begun to talk to her in that strain of tender pity she inspired me with; but she would not own to me that she is not perfectly happy. I have since endeavoured to learn the real cause of her retirement, without being able to get any other account, but that every body was surprised at it, and nobody guessed the reason. I have been several times to see her; but it gives me too much melancholy to see so agreeable a young creature buried alive. I am not surprised that nuns have so often inspired violent passions; the pity one naturally feels for them, when they seem worthy of another destiny, making an easy way for yet more tender sentiments. I never in my life had so little charity for the Roman Catholic religion, as since I see the misery it occasions;

so many poor unhappy women! and then the gross superstition of the common people, who are some or other of them, day and night offering bits of candle to the wooden figures, that are set up almost in every street. The processions I see very often are a pageantry, as offensive and apparently contradictory to common sense as the pagods of China. God knows whether it be the womanly spirit of contradiction that works in me, but there never, before, was such zeal against popery in the heart of, dear Madam, &c. &c.

LETTER XIII.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. ——.

Vienna, Oct. 16, O. S. 1716.

I DESERVE not all the reproaches you make me. If I have been some time without answering your letter, it is not that I do not know how many thanks are due to you for it, or that I am stupid enough to prefer any amusements to the pleasure of hearing from you; but after the professions of esteem you have so obligingly made me, I cannot help delaying, as long as I can, shewing you that you are mistaken. If you are sincere, when you say you expect to be extremely entertained by my letters, I ought to be mortified at the disappointment that I am sure you will receive when you hear from me; though I have done my best endeavours to find out something worth writing to you. I have seen every thing that was to be seen, with a very diligent curiosity. Here are some fine villas, particularly the late prince of Lichtenstein's; but the statues are all modern, and the pictures not of the first hands. It is true, the Emperor has some of great value. I was yesterday to see the repository, which they call his Treasure, where they seem to have been more diligent in amassing a great quantity of things, than in the choice of them. I spent above five hours there, and yet there were very few things that stopped me long to consider them. But the number is prodigious, being a very long gallery filled on both sides, and five large rooms. There is a vast quantity of paintings, amongst which are many fine miniatures, but the most valuable pictures are a few of Correggio, those of Titian being at the Favorita.

The cabinet of jewels did not appear to me so rich as I expected to see it. They shewed me there a cup, about the size of a tea dish, of one entire emerald, which they had so particular a respect for, that only the Emperor has the liberty of touching it. There is a large cabinet full of curiosities of clock-work, only one of which I thought worth observing, that was a craw-fish with all the motions so natural that it was hard to distinguish it from the life.

The next cabinet was a large collection of agates, some of them extremely beautiful and of uncommon size, and several vases of lapis lazuli. I was surprized to see the cabinet of medals so poorly furnished; I did not remark one of any value, and they are kept in a most ridiculous disorder. As to the antiques, very few of them deserve that name. Upon my saying they were modern, I could not forbear laughing at the answer of the profound antiquary that shewed them, that they were ancient enough, for to his knowledge they had been there these forty years; but the next cabinet diverted me yet better, being nothing else but a parcel of wax babies, and toys in ivory, very well worthy to be presented children of five years old. Two of the rooms were wholly filled with these trifles of all kinds, set in jewels, amongst which I was desired to observe a crucifix, that they assured me had spoke very wisely to the Emperor Leopold. I will not trouble you with a catalogue of the rest of the lumber, but I must not forget to mention a small piece of loadstone that held up an anchor of steel too heavy for me to lift. This is what I thought most curious in the whole treasure. There are some few heads of ancient statues; but several of them are defaced by modern additions. I foresee that you will be very little satisfied with this letter, and I dare hardly ask you to be good-natured enough to charge the dulness of it on the barrenness of the subject, and to overlook the stupidity of your, &c. &c.

LETTER XIV.

The same to the Countess of ——.

Prague, Nov. 17, O. S. 1716.

I HOPE my dear sister wants no new proof of my sincere affection for her; but I am sure if you do, I could not give you a stronger than writing at this time, after three days, or, more properly speaking, three nights and days, hard post-travelling.—The kingdom of Bohemia is the most desert of any I have seen in Germany. The villages are so poor, and the post-houses so miserable, that clean straw and fair water are blessings not always to be met with, and better accommodation not to be hoped for. Though I carried my own bed with me, I could not some times find a place to set it up in; and I rather chose to travel all night, as cold as it is, wrapped up in my furs, than go into the common stoves, which are filled with a mixture of all sorts of ill scents.

This town was once the royal seat of the Bohemian King, and is still the capital of the kingdom. There are yet some remains of its former splendour, being one of the largest towns in Germany, but, for the most part, old built and thinly inhabited, which makes the houses very cheap. Those people of quality who cannot easily bear the expence of Vienna, choose to reside here, where they have assemblies, music, and all other diversions (those of a court excepted), at very moderate rates, all things here being in great abundance, especially the best wild fowl I ever tasted. I have already been visited by some of the most considerable ladies, whose relations I know at Vienna. They are dressed after the fashions there, after the manner that the people at Exeter imitate those of London; that is, their imitation is more excessive than the original. It is not easy to describe what extraordinary figures they make. The person is so much lost between headdress and petticoat, that they have as much occasion to write upon their backs, "This is a woman," for the information of travellers, as ever sign-post painter had to write, "This is a bear." I will not forget to write to you again from Dresden and Leipzig, being much more solicitous to content your curiosity, than to indulge my own repose. I am, &c.

LETTER XV.

The same to the Countess of ——.

Leipzig, Nov. 21, O. S. 1716.

I BELIEVE, dear sister, you will easily forgive my not writing to you from Dresden, as I promised, when I tell you, that I never went out of my chaise from Prague to this place. You may imagine how heartily I was tired with twenty-four hours post travelling, without sleep or refreshment (for I can never sleep in a coach, however fatigued). We passed by moon-shine, the frightful precipices that divide Bohemia from Saxony, at the bottom of which runs the river Elbe; but I cannot say, that I had reason to fear drowning in it, being perfectly convinced, that in case of a tumble, it was utterly impossible to come alive to the bottom. In many places the road is so narrow, that I could not discern an inch of space between the wheels and the precipice. Yet I was so good a wife not to wake Mr. W——y, who was fast asleep by my side, to make him share in my fears, since the danger was unavoidable, till I perceived by the bright light of the moon, our postillions nodding on horse-back, while the horses were on the full gallop. Then indeed I thought it very convenient to call out to desire them to look where they were going. My calling waked Mr. W——y, and he was much more surprized than myself at the situation we were in, and assured me, that he passed the Alps five times in different places, without ever having gone a road so dangerous. I have been told since, that it is common to find the bodies of travellers in the Elbe; but thank God that was not our destiny, and we came safe to Dresden, so much tired with fear and fatigue, it was not possible for me to compose myself to write. After passing these dreadful rocks, Dresden appeared to me a wonderfully agreeable situation, in a fine large place on the banks of the Elbe. I was very glad to stay there a day to rest myself. The town is the neatest I have seen in Germany; most of the houses are new built; the Elector's palace is very handsome, and his repository full of curiosities of different kinds, with a collection of medals very much esteemed. Sir ——, our King's Envoy, came to see me here, and Madam de L——, whom

whom I knew in London, when her husband was minister to the king of Poland there. She offered me all things in her power to entertain me, and brought some ladies with her, whom she presented to me. The Saxon ladies resemble the Austrian no more than the Chinese do those of London; they are very genteelly dressed after the English and French modes, and have, generally, pretty faces, but they are the most determined *mimaudieres* in the whole world, they would think it a mortal sin against good breeding, if they either spoke or moved in a natural manner. They all affect a little soft lisp, and a pretty pitty-pat step; which female frailties ought, however, to be forgiven them in favour of their civility and good nature to strangers, which I have a great deal of reason to praise.

The Countess of Cozelle is kept prisoner in a melancholy castle, some leagues from hence, and I cannot forbear telling you what I have heard of her, because it seems to me very extraordinary, though I foresee I shall swell my letter to the size of a pacquet.—She was mistress to the King of Poland (Elector of Saxony), with so absolute a dominion over him, that never any lady had so much power in that court. They tell a pleasant story of his majesty's first declaration of love, which he made in a visit to her, bringing in one hand a bag of a hundred thousand crowns, and in the other a horse-shoe, which he snapped asunder before her face, leaving her to draw the consequences of such remarkable proofs of strength and liberality. I know not which charmed her most, but she consented to leave her husband, and to give herself up to him entirely, being divorced publicly in such a manner as by their laws permits either party to marry again. God knows whether it was at this time, or in some other fond fit, but it is certain the King had the weakness to make her a formal contract of marriage; which, though it could signify nothing during the life of the Queen, pleased her so well, that she could not be contented, without telling it to all the people she saw, and giving herself the airs of a Queen. Men endure every thing while they are in love; but when the excess of passion was cooled by long possession, his Majesty began to reflect on the ill consequences of leaving such a paper in her hands, and desired to have it restored him. But she rather chose to endure all the most violent effects of his anger than give it up; and though she is one of the richest and most avaricious ladies of her country, she has refused the offer of the continuation of a large pension, and the security of a vast sum of money she has amassed, and has at last provoked the King to confine her person to a castle, where she endures all the terrors of a strait imprisonment, and remains still inflexible either to threats or promises. Her violent passions have brought her indeed into fits, which it is supposed will soon put an end to her life. I cannot forbear having some compassion for a woman that suffers for a point of honour, however mistaken, especially in a country where points of honour are not over scrupulously observed among ladies.

I could have wished Mr. W———y's business had permitted him a longer stay at Dresden.

Perhaps I am partial to a town where they profess the protestant religion, but every thing seemed to me with quite another way of politeness, than I have found in other places. *Leipsic*, where I am at present, is a town very considerable for its trade, and I take this opportunity of buying pages' liveries, gold stuffs for myself, &c. all things of that kind being at least double the price at Vienna, partly because of the excessive customs, and partly through want of genius and industry in the people, who make no one sort of thing there, so that the ladies are obliged to send even for their shoes out of Saxony. The fair here is one of the most considerable in Germany, and the resort of all the people of quality, as well as of the merchants. This is also a fortified town, but I avoid ever mentioning fortifications, being sensible that I know not how to speak of them. I am the more easy under my ignorance, when I reflect that I am sure you will willingly forgive the omission; for if I made you the most exact description of all the ravelins and bastions I see in my travels, I dare swear you will ask me what is a ravelin? and what is a bastion? Adieu, my dear sister.

LETTER XVI.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ———.

Brunswick, Nov. 23, O. S. 1716.

I AM just come to Brunswick, a very old town, but which has the advantage of being the capital of the Duke of Wolfenbuttle's dominions, a family (not to speak of its ancient honours) illustrious, by having its younger branch on the throne of England, and having given two Empresses to Germany. I have not forgot to drink your health here in mum, which I think very well deserves its reputation of being the best in the world. This letter is the third I have writ to you during my journey, and I declare to you, that if you do not send me immediately a full and true account of all the changes and chances amongst our London acquaintance, I will not write you any description of Hanover (where I hope to be to-night), though I know you have more curiosity to hear of that place than any other.

LETTER XVII.

The same to the Countess of B.

Hanover, Nov. 25, O. S. 1716.

I RECEIVED your ladyship's letter but the day before I left Vienna, though, by the date, I ought to have had it much sooner; but nothing was ever worse regulated than the post in most parts of Germany. I can assure you, the packet at Prague was behind my chaise, and in that manner conveyed to Dresden, so that the secrets of half the country were at my mercy, if I had had any curiosity for them. I would not longer delay my thanks for yours, though the number of my acquaintances here, and my duty of attending at court, leave me hardly any time to dispose of. I am extremely pleased that I can tell you, without flattery or partiality, that our young Prince has all the accomplishments that it is possible to have at his age, with an air of sprightliness and understanding, and something so very engaging and easy in his behaviour, that he needs not the advantage of his rank to appear charming. I had the honour of a long conversation with him last night, before the King came in. His governor retired on purpose (as he told me afterwards) that I might make some judgment of his genius, by hearing him speak without constraint; and I was surprised at the quickness and politeness that appeared in every thing he said, joined to a person perfectly agreeable, and the fine fair hair of the Princess.

This town is neither large nor handsome: but the palace is capable of holding a much greater court than that of St. James's. The king has had the goodness to appoint us a lodging in one part of it, without which we should have been very ill accommodated; for the vast number of English crowds the town so much, it is very good luck to get one sorry room in a miserable tavern. I dined to-day with the Portuguese Ambassador, who thinks himself very happy to have two wretched parlours in an inn. I have now made the tour of Germany, and cannot help observing a considerable difference between travelling here and in England. One sees none of those fine seats of noblemen, so common among us, nor any thing like a country gentleman's house, though they have many situations perfectly fine. But the whole people are divided into absolute sovereignties, where all the riches and magnificence are at court, or into communities of merchants, such as Nuremburg and Frankfort, where they live always in town for the convenience of trade. The King's company of French comedians play here every night. They are very well dressed, and some of them not ill actors. His Majesty dines and sups constantly in public. The court is very numerous, and his affability and goodness make it one of the most agreeable places in the world. Dear Madam, your L. &c. &c.

LETTER XVIII.

The same to the Lady R——.

Hanover, Oct. 1, O. S. 1716.

I AM very glad, my dear Lady R———, that you have been so well pleased, as you tell me, at the report of my returning to England; though, like other pleasures, I can assure you it has no real foundation. I hope you know me enough to take my word against any report concerning me. It is true, as to distance of place, I am much nearer to London than I was some weeks ago; but as to the thoughts of a return, I never was farther

off

off in my life. I own, I could with great joy indulge the pleasing hopes of seeing you and the very few others that share my esteem; but while Mr. W——— is determined to proceed in his design, I am determined to follow him. I am running on upon my own affairs, that is to say, I am going to write very dully, as most people do, when they write of themselves. I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject, by telling you, that I am now got into the region of beauty. All the women have, literally, rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. Those perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle light; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much as Mrs. Salmon's court of Great Britain, and are in as much danger of melting away, by too near approaching the fire, which they, for that reason, carefully avoid, though it is now such excessive cold weather, that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial. The snow is already very deep, and the people begin to slide about in their *traineaus*. This is a favourite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge, that hold a lady and a gentleman, and are drawn by one horse. The gentleman has the honour of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the traineau, are all as fine as they can be made, and when there are many of them together, it is a very agreeable show. At Vienna, where all pieces of magnificence are carried to excess, there are sometimes machines of this kind, that cost five or six hundred pounds English. The Duke of Wolfenbuttle is now at this court: you know he is nearly related to our King, and uncle to the remaining empress, who is, I believe, the most beautiful princess upon earth. She is now with child, which is all the consolation of the Imperial Court for the loss of the Archduke. I took my leave of her the day before I left Vienna, and she began to speak to me with so much grief and tenderness of the death of that young prince, I had much ado to with-hold my tears. You know that I am not at all partial to people for their titles; but I own that I love that charming princess (if I may use so familiar an expression), and if I had not, I should have been very much moved at the tragical end of an only son, born after being so long desired, and at length killed by want of good management, weaning him in the beginning of the winter. Adieu, dear Lady R——, continue to write to me, and believe none of your goodness is lost upon your, &c.

LETTER XIX.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ———.

Blanckenburg, Oct. 17, O. S. 1716.

I RECEIVED yours, dear sister, the very day I left Hanover. You may easily imagine I was then in too great a hurry to answer it; but you see I take the first opportunity of doing myself that pleasure. I came here the 15th, very late at night, after a terrible journey, in the worst roads and weather that ever poor traveller suffered. I have taken this little fatigue, merely to oblige the reigning Empress, and carry a message from her Imperial Majesty to the Duchess of Blanckenburg, her mother, who is a princess of great address and good breeding, and may be still called a fine woman. It was so late when I came to this town, I did not think it proper to disturb the Duke and Duchess with the news of my arrival; so I took up my quarters in a miserable inn; but as soon as I had sent my compliments to their Highnesses, they immediately sent me their own coach and six horses, which had however enough to do to draw us up the very high hill on which the castle is situated. The Duchess is extremely obliging to me, and this little court is not without its diversions. The Duke *taillys* at *basset* every night, and the Duchess tells me, she is so well pleased with my company, that it makes her play less than she used to do. I should find it very difficult to steal time to write, if she was not now at church, where I cannot wait on her, not understanding the language enough to pay my devotions in it. You will not forgive me, if I do not say something of Hanover: I cannot tell you that the town is either large or magnificent. The opera-house, which was built by the late elector, is much finer than that of Vienna. I was very sorry that the ill weather did not permit me to see Hernhausen in all its beauty; but in spite of the snow, I thought

thought the gardens very fine. I was particularly surprised at the vast number of orange trees, much larger than any I have ever seen in England, though this climate is certainly colder. But I had more reason to wonder, that night at the King's table, to see a present from a gentleman of this country, of two large baskets full of ripe oranges and lemons of different sorts, many of which were quite new to me; and what I thought worth all the rest, two ripe *Ananasses*, which, to my taste, are a fruit perfectly delicious. You know they are naturally the growth of Brazil, and I could not imagine how they came here but by enchantment. Upon inquiry, I learnt that they have brought their stoves to such perfection, they lengthen their summer as long as they please, giving to every plant the degree of heat it would receive from the sun in its native soil. The effect is very near the same: I am surprised we do not practise, in England, so useful an invention. This reflection leads me to consider our obstinacy in shaking with cold, five months in the year, rather than make use of stoves, which are certainly one of the greatest conveniences of life. Besides, they are so far from spoiling the form of a room, that they add very much to the magnificence of it, when they are painted and gilt, as they are at Vienna, or at Dresden, where they are often in the shapes of China jars, statues, or fine cabinets, so naturally represented, that they are not to be distinguished. If ever I return, in defiance to the fashion, you shall certainly see one in the chamber of, dear sister, your, &c.

I will write often, since you desire it; but I must beg you to be a little more particular in yours; you fancy me at forty miles distance, and forget, that, after so long an absence, I cannot understand hints.

LETTER XX.

The same to the Lady ——.

Vienna, Jan. 1, O. S. 1717.

I HAVE just received here at Vienna, your Ladyship's compliments on my return to England, sent me from Hanover. You see, Madam, all things that are asserted with confidence, are not absolutely true; and that you have no sort of reason to complain of me for making my designed return a mystery to you, when you say all the world are informed of it. You may tell all the world in my name, that they are never so well informed of my affairs as I am myself, that I am very positive I am at this time at Vienna, where the carnival is begun, and all sorts of diversions are carried to the greatest height, except that of masquing, which is never permitted during a war with the Turks. The balls are in public places, where the men pay a gold ducat at entrance, but the ladies nothing. I am told that these houses get sometimes a thousand ducats in a night. They are very magnificently furnished, and the music good, if they had not that detestable custom of mixing hunting horns with it, that almost deafen the company. But that noise is so agreeable here, they never make a concert without them. The ball always concludes with English country dances, to the number of thirty or forty couple, and so ill danced, that there is very little pleasure in them. They know but half a dozen, and they have danced them over and over these fifty years. I would fain have taught them some new ones, but I found it would be some months labour to make them comprehend them. Last night there was an Italian comedy acted at court. The scenes were pretty, but the comedy itself such intolerable low farce, without either wit or humour, that I was surprised how all the court could sit there attentively for four hours together. No women are suffered to act on the stage, and the men dressed like them were such awkward figures, they very much added to the ridicule of the spectacle. What completed the diversion was the excessive cold, which was so great I thought I should have died there. It is now the very extremity of the winter here; the Danube is entirely frozen, and the weather not to be supported without stoves and furs; but, however, the air so clear, almost every body is well, and colds not half so common as in England. I am persuaded there cannot be a purer air, nor more wholesome, than that of Vienna. The plenty and excellence of all sorts of provisions are greater here than in any place I ever was before, and it is not very expensive to keep a splendid table. It is really a pleasure to pass through the markets, and see the abundance of what we should think rarities, of fowls and veni-

son, that are daily brought in from Hungary and Bohemia. They want nothing but shell-fish, and are so fond of oysters, that they have them sent from Venice, and eat them very greedily, stink or not stink. Thus I obey your commands, Madam, in giving you an account of Vienna, though I know you will not be satisfied with it. You chide me for my laziness in not telling you a thousand agreeable and surprising things, that you say you are sure I have seen and heard. Upon my word, Madam, it is my regard to truth, and not laziness, that I do not entertain you with as many prodigies as other travellers use to divert their readers with. I might easily pick up wonders in every town I pass through, or tell you a long series of Popish miracles, but I cannot fancy that there is any thing new in letting you know, that priests will lie, and the mob believe, all the world over. Then as for news, that you are so inquisitive about, how can it be entertaining to you (that do not know the people), that the Prince of —— has forsaken the Countess of ——? or that the Princess such a one has an intrigue with Count such a one? Would you have me write novels like the Countess of D'——? and is it not better to tell you a plain truth, that I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

Lady M. W. Montague to the Countess of ——.

Vienna, Jan. 16, O. S. 1717.

I AM now, dear sister, to take leave of you for a long time, and of Vienna for ever, designing, to-morrow, to begin my journey through Hungary, in spite of the excessive cold and deep snows, which is enough to damp a greater courage than I am mistress of. But my principle of passive obedience carries me through every thing. I have had my audience of leave of the Empress. His Imperial Majesty was pleased to be present, when I waited on the reigning Empress, and, after a very obliging conversation, both their Imperial Majesties invited me to take Vienna in my road back; but I have no thoughts of enduring, over again, so great a fatigue. I delivered a letter from the Duchess of Blankenburg. I staid but a few days at that court, though her Highness pressed me very much to stay; and when I left her, engaged me to write to her. I wrote you a long letter from thence, which I hope you have received, though you do not mention it: but I believe I forgot to tell you one curiosity in all the German courts, which I cannot forbear taking notice of: all the princes keep favourite dwarfs. The Emperor and Empress have two of these little monsters, as ugly as devils, especially the female; but they are all bedawbed with diamonds, and stand at her Majesty's elbow in all public places. The Duke of Wolfenbuttel has one, and the Duchess of Blankenburg is not without hers, but indeed the most proportionable I ever saw. I am told the King of Denmark has so far improved upon this fashion, that his dwarf is his chief minister. I can assign no reason for their fondness for these pieces of deformity, but the opinion all the absolute princes have, that it is below them to converse with the rest of mankind: and not to be quite alone, they are forced to seek their companions among the refuse of human nature, these creatures being the only part of their court privileged to talk freely to them. I am at present confined to my chamber by a sore throat, and am really glad of the excuse to avoid seeing people, that I love well enough, to be very much mortified when I think I am going to part with them for ever. It is true, the Austrians are not commonly the most polite people in the world, nor the most agreeable. But Vienna is inhabited by all nations, and I had formed to myself a little society of such as were perfectly to my own taste. And though the number was not very great, I could never pick up, in any other place, such a number of reasonable agreeable people. We were almost always together, and you know I have ever been of opinion, that a chosen conversation, composed of a few that one esteems, is the greatest happiness of life. Here are some Spaniards of both sexes, that have all the vivacity and generosity of sentiments anciently ascribed to their nation; and could I believe that the whole kingdom were like them, I should wish nothing more than to end my days there. The ladies of my acquaintance have so much goodness for me, they cry whenever they see me, since I am determined to undertake this journey. And indeed I am not very easy when I reflect on what I am going to suffer. Almost

every

every body I see frights me with some new difficulty. Prince Eugene has been so good as to say all the things he could to persuade me to stay till the Danube is thawed, that I may have the conveniency of going by water, assuring me that the houses in Hungary are such, as are no defence against the weather, and that I shall be obliged to travel three or four days between Buda and Essek, without finding any house at all, through desert plains covered with snow; where the cold is so violent, many have been killed by it. I own these terrors have made a very deep impression on my mind, because I believe he tells me things truly as they are, and nobody can be better informed of them.

Now I have named that great man, I am sure you expect I should say something particular of him, having the advantage of seeing him very often; but I am as unwilling to speak of him at Vienna as I should be to talk of Hercules in the court of Omphale if I had seen him there. I do not know what comfort other people find in considering the weakness of great men (because, perhaps, it brings them nearer to their level), but it is always a mortification to me to observe, that there is no perfection in humanity. The young Prince of Portugal is the admiration of the whole court; he is handsome and polite, with a great vivacity. All the officers tell wonders of his gallantry the last campaign. He is lodged at court with all the honour due to his rank.——Adieu, dear sister; this is the last account you will have from me of Vienna. If I survive my journey, you shall hear from me again. I can say, with great truth, in the words of Moneses, I have long learnt to hold myself as nothing; but when I think of the fatigue my poor infant must suffer, I have all a mother's fondness in my eyes, and all her tender passions in my heart.

P. S. I have written a letter to my Lady———, that I believe she will not like; and upon cooler reflection, I think I had done better to have let it alone; but I was downright peevish at all her questions, and her ridiculous imagination, that I have certainly seen abundance of wonders which I keep to myself out of mere malice. She is very angry that I will not lie like other travellers. I verily believe she expects I should tell her of the Anthropophagie, men whose heads grow below their shoulders: however, pray say something to pacify her.

LETTER XXII.

The same to Mr. Pope.

Vienna, Jan. 16, O. S. 1717.

I have not time to answer your letter, being in all the hurry of preparing for my journey; but I think I ought to bid adieu to my friends with the same solemnity, as if I was going to mount a breach, at least, if I am to believe the information of the people here, who denounce all sort of terrors to me; and, indeed, the weather is at present such, as very few ever set out in. I am threatened, at the same time, with being frozen to death, buried in the snow, and taken by the Tartars, who ravage that part of Hungary I am to pass. It is true, we shall have a considerable *escorte*, so that possibly, I may be diverted with a new scene, by finding myself in the midst of a battle. How my adventures will conclude, I leave entirely to Providence; if comically, you shall hear of them.——Pray be so good as to tell Mr. ——— I have received his letter. Make him my adieus; if I live, I will answer it. The same compliment to my Lady R———.

LETTER XXIII.

The same to the Countess of ——.

Peterwaradin, Jan. 30, O. S. 1717.

At length, dear sister, I am safely arrived with all my family in good health at Peterwaradin; having suffered so little from the rigour of the season (against which we were well provided by furs), and found such tolerable accommodation every where, by the care of sending before, that I can hardly forbear laughing when I recollect all the frightful ideas that were given me of this journey. These, I see, were wholly owing to the tenderness of my Vienna friends, and their desire of keeping me with them for this winter. Perhaps it will not be disagreeable to give you a short journal of my journey, being through a country entirely unknown to you, and very little passed, even by the Hungarians themselves, who generally choose to take the conveniency of going down the Danube.

We have had the blessing of being favoured with finer weather than is common at this time of the year; though the snow was so deep, we were obliged to have our own coaches fixed upon traineaus, which move so swift and so easily, it is by far the most agreeable manner of [illegible] post. We came to Raab (the [illegible] from Vienna) on the [illegible], where Mr. W— [illegible] of our arrival [illegible], the best house in [illegible] was provided for us, the garrison put under arms, a guard ordered at our door, and all other honours paid to us. The governor and all other officers immediately waited on Mr. W———, to know if there was any thing to be done for his service. The Bishop of Temeswar came to visit us, with great civility, earnestly pressing us to dine with him next day, which we refusing, as being resolved to pursue our journey, he sent us several baskets of winter fruit, and a great variety of Hungarian wines, with a young hind just killed. This is a prelate of great power in this country, of the ancient family of Nadasti, so considerable for many ages in this kingdom. He is a very polite, agreeable, cheerful old man, wearing the Hungarian habit, with a venerable white beard down to his girdle. Raab is a strong town, well garrisoned and fortified, and was a long time the frontier town between the Turkish and German empires. It has its name from the river Rab, on which it is situated, just on its meeting with the Danube, in an open champaign country. It was first taken by the Turks under the command of Bassa Sinan, in the reign of Sultan Amurath III. in the year fifteen hundred and ninety-four. The governor being supposed to have betrayed it, was afterwards beheaded by the Emperor's command. The Counts of Schwartzenburg and Palfi retook it by surprise 1598, since which time it has remained in the hands of the Germans, though the Turks once more attempted to gain it by stratagem in 1642. The cathedral is large and well built, which is all I saw remarkable in the town. Leaving Comora on the other side the river, we went the eighteenth to Nosmuhl, a small village, where, however, we made shift to find tolerable accommodation. We continued two days travelling between this place and Buda, through the finest plains in the world, as even as if they [illegible] extremely fruitful; but [illegible] desert and uncultiv[illegible] wars [illegible] ror; and [illegible] of the [illegible] peror [illegible] mind [illegible] party, and was naturally [illegible] merciful temper; but [illegible] into the hands of a Jesuit, he was more cruel and treacherous to his poor Hungarian subjects, than ever the Turk has been to the Christians; breaking without scruple, his coronation oath, and his faith, solemnly given in many public treaties. Indeed nothing can be more melancholy than in travelling through Hungary, to reflect on the former flourishing state of that kingdom, and to see such a noble spot of earth almost uninhabited. Such are also the present circumstances of Buda (where we arrived very early the twenty-second), once the royal seat of the Hungarian kings, whose palace there was reckoned one of the most beautiful buildings of the age, now wholly destroyed, no part of the town having been repaired since the last siege, but the fortifications and the castle, which is the present residence of the governor-general Ragule, an officer of great merit. He came immediately to see us, and carried us in his coach to his house, where I was received by his lady with all possible civility, and magnificently entertained. This city is situated upon a little hill on the south side of the Danube. The castle is much higher than the town, and from it the prospect is very noble. Without the walls lie a vast number of little houses, or rather huts, that they call the Rascian town, being altogether inhabited by that people. The governor assured me it would furnish twelve thousand fighting men. These towns look very odd; their houses stand in rows, many thousands of them so close together, that they appear, at a little distance, like old fashioned thatched tents. They consist, every one of them, of one hovel above, and another under ground; these are their summer and winter apartments. Buda was first taken by Solyman the Magnificent, in 15[illegible], and lost the following year to Ferdinand the First, King of Bohemia. Solyman regained it by the treachery of the

the garrison, and voluntarily gave it in to the hands of King John of Hungary, after whose death, his son being an infant, Ferdinand laid siege to it, and the Queen mother was forced to call Solyman to her aid. He indeed raised the siege; but left the Turkish garrison in the town, and commanded her to remove her court from thence, which she was forced to submit to in 1541. It resisted afterwards the sieges laid to it, by the Marquis of Bradenburgh, in the year 1542; Count Schwartzenburg, in 1598: General Rosworm, 1602; and the Duke of Lorrain, commander of the Emperor's forces, in 1684, to whom it yielded, in 1686, after an obstinate defence, Apti Bassa, the governor, being killed, fighting in the breach, with a Roman bravery. The loss of this town was so important, and so much resented by the Turks, that it occasioned the deposing of their Emperor Mahomet the Fourth, the year following.

We did not proceed on our journey till the twenty-third, when we passed through Adam and Todowar, both considerable towns, when in the hands of the Turks, but now quite ruined. The remains, however, of some Turkish towns, shew something of what they have been. This part of the country is very much overgrown with wood, and little frequented. It is incredible what vast numbers of wild fowl we saw, which often live here to a good old age,——and undisturbed by guns, in quiet sleep. We came the five-and-twentieth to Mohatch, and were shewed the field near it, where Lewis, the young King of Hungary, lost his army and his life, being drowned in a ditch, trying to fly from Batybeus, general of Solyman the Magnificent. This battle opened the first passage for the Turks into the heart of Hungary.——I do not name to you the little villages, of which I can say nothing remarkable; but I will assure you, I have always found a warm stove and great plenty, particularly of wild boar, venison, and all kinds of *gibier*. The few people that inhabit Hungary live easily enough; they have no money; but the woods and plains afford them provision in great abundance; they were ordered to give us all things necessary, even what horses we pleased to demand, *gratis*. but Mr. W——— would not oppress the poor country people, by making use of this order, and always paid them to the full worth of what we had. They were so surprised at this unexpected generosity, which they are very little used to, that they always pressed upon us, at parting, a dozen of fat pheasants, or something of that sort, for a present. Their dress is very primitive, being only a plain sheep's skin, and a cap and boots of the same stuff. You may easily imagine this lasts them many winters; and thus they have very little occasion for money. The twenty-sixth we passed over the frozen Danube, with all our equipage and carriages. We met, on the other side, General Veterani, who invited us, with great civility, to pass the night at a little castle of his, a few miles off, assuring us we should have a very hard day's journey to reach Essek. This we found but too true, the woods being very dangerous, and scarce passable, from the vast quantity of wolves that hoard in them. We came, however, safe, though late, to Essek, where we staid a day, to dispatch a courier with letters to the Bassa of Belgrade; and I took that opportunity of seeing the town, which is not very large, but fair built and well fortified. This was a town of great trade, very rich and populous, when in the hands of the Turks. It is situated on the Drave, which runs into the Danube. The bridge was esteemed one of the most extraordinary in the world, being eight thousand paces long, and all built of oak. It was burnt, and the city laid in ashes by Count Lesly in 1685, but was again repaired and fortified by the Turks, who however abandoned it in 1687. General Dunnewalt then took possession of it for the Emperor, in whose hands it has remained ever since, and is esteemed one of the bulwarks of Hungary. The twenty-eighth we went to Bocorvar, a very large Rascian town, all built after the manner I have described to you. We were met there by Colonel ———, who would not suffer us to go any where but to his quarters, where I found his wife, a very agreeable Hungarian lady, and his niece and daughter, two pretty young women, crowded into three or four Rascian houses, cast into one, and made as neat and convenient as those places are capable of being made. The Hungarian ladies are much handsomer than those of Austria. All the Vienna beauties are of that country.

They are generally very fair and well shaped, and their dress, I think, is extremely becoming. This lady was in a gown of scarlet velvet, lined and faced with sables, made exact to her shape, and the skirt falling to her feet. The sleeves are strait to their arms, and the stays buttoned before, with two rows of little buttons of gold, pearl or diamonds. On their heads they wear a tassel of gold, that hangs low on one side, lined with sable, or some other fine fur. They gave us a handsome dinner, and I thought the conversation very polite and agreeable. They would accompany us part of our way. The twenty-ninth we arrived here, where we were met by the commanding officer at the head of all the officers of the garrison. We are lodged in the best apartment of the governor's house, and entertained in a very splendid manner by the Emperor's order. We wait here till all points are adjusted concerning our reception on the Turkish frontiers. Mr. W————'s courier, which he sent from Essek, returned this morning with the Bassa's answer in a purse of scarlet satin, which the interpreter here has translated. It is to promise him to be honourably received. I desired him to appoint where he would be met by the Turkish convoy. He has dispatched the courier back, naming Betsko, a village in the midway between Peterwaradin and Belgrade. We shall stay here till we receive his answer. Thus, dear sister, I have given you a very particular, and (I am afraid you will think) a tedious account of this part of my travels. It was not an affectation of shewing my reading that has made me tell you some little scraps of the history of the towns I have passed through. I have always avoided any thing of that kind, when I spoke of places that I believe you knew the story of as well as myself. But Hungary being a part of the world, which I believe quite new to you, I thought you might read with some pleasure an account of it, which I have been very solicitous to get from the best hands. However, if you do not like it, it is in your power to forbear reading it. I am, dear sister.

I am promised to have this letter carefully sent to Vienna.

LETTER XXIV.

Lady M. W. Montague to Mr. Pope.

Belgrade, Feb. 12, O. S. 1717.

I DID verily intend to write you a long letter from Peterwaradin, where I expected to stay three or four days; but the Bassa here was in such haste to see us, that he dispatched the courier back (which Mr W—— had sent to know the time he would send the convoy to meet us) without suffering him to pull off his boots. My letters were not thought important enough to stay our journey, and we left Peterwaradin the next day, being visited on by the chief officers of the garrison, and a considerable convoy of Germans and Rascians. The Emperor has several regiments of these people, but, to say the truth, they are rather plunderers than soldiers, having no pay, and being obliged to furnish their own arms and horses; they rather look like vagabond gypsies, or stout beggars, than regular troops. I cannot forbear speaking a word of this race of creatures, who are very numerous all over Hungary. They have a patriarch of their own at Grand Cairo, and are really of the Greek church, but their extreme ignorance gives their priests occasion to impose several new notions upon them. These fellows letting their hair and beard grow inviolate, make exactly the figure of the Indian Bramins. They are heirs-general to all the money of the laity; for which, in return, they give them formal passports signed and sealed for heaven; and the wives and children only inherit the house and cattle. In most other points they follow the Greek church. —— This little digression has interrupted my telling you we passed over the fields of Carlowitz, where the last great victory was obtained by Prince Eugene over the Turks. The marks of that glorious bloody day are yet recent, the field being yet strewed with the skulls and carcasses of unburied men, horses and camels. I could not look, without horror, on such numbers of mangled human bodies, nor without reflecting on the injustice of war, that makes murder not only necessary, but meritorious. Nothing seems to be a plainer proof of the irrationality of mankind (whatever fine claims we pretend to reason) than the

the rage with which they contest for a small spot of ground, when such vast parts of fruitful earth lie quite uninhabited. It is true, custom has now made it unavoidable; but can there be a greater demonstration of want of reason, than a custom being firmly established, so plainly contrary to the interest of man in general? I am a good deal inclined to believe Mr. Hobbs, that the state of nature, is a state of war; but thence I conclude human nature not rational, if the word reason means common sense, as I suppose it does. I have a great many admirable arguments to support this reflection; I will not however trouble you with them, but return, in a plain style, to the history of my travels.

We were met at Betsko (a village in the midway between Belgrade and Peterwaradin) by an Aga of the Janizaries, with a body of Turks, exceeding the Germans by one hundred men, though the Bassa had engaged to send exactly the same number. You may judge by this of their fears. I am really persuaded, that they hardly thought the odds of one hundred men set them even with the Germans; however, I was very uneasy till they were parted, fearing some quarrel might arise notwithstanding the parol given. We came late to Belgrade, the deep snows making the ascent to it very difficult. It seems a strong city, fortified, on the east-side, by the Danube; and on the south, by the river Save, and was formerly the barrier of Hungary. It was first taken by Solyman the Magnificent; and since, by the Emperor's forces, led by the Elector of Bavaria. The Emperor held it only two years, it being retaken by the Grand Vizier. It is now fortified with the utmost care and skill the Turks are capable of, and strengthened by a very numerous garrison, of their bravest Janizaries, commanded by a Bassa *Seraskier* (i. e. General); though this last expression is not very just; for to say truth, the Seraskier is commanded by the Janizaries. These troops have an absolute authority here, and their conduct carries much more the aspect of rebellion, than the appearance of subordination. You may judge of this by the following story, which, at the same time, will give you an idea of the admirable intelligence of the Governor of Peterwaradin, though so few hours distant. We were told by him at Peterwaradin, that the garrison and inhabitants of Belgrade were so weary of the war, they had killed their Bassa about two months ago, in a mutiny, because he had suffered himself to be prevailed upon, by a bribe of five purses (five hundred pounds sterling), to give permission to the Tartars to ravage the German frontiers. We were very well pleased to hear of such favourable dispositions in the people; but when we came hither, we found the governor had been ill informed, and the real truth of the story to be this. The late Bassa fell under the displeasure of his soldiers, for no other reason, but restraining their incursions on the Germans. They took it into their heads, from that mildness, that he had intelligence with the enemy, and sent such information to the Grand Signior at Adrianople; but, redress not coming quick enough from thence, they assembled themselves in a tumultuous manner, and by force dragged their Bassa before the Cadi and Mufti, and there demanded justice in a mutinous way: one crying out, Why he protected the Infidels? Another, Why he squeezed them of their money? The Bassa, easily guessing their purpose, calmly replied to them, that they asked him too many questions, and that he had but one life, which must answer for all. They then immediately fell upon him with their scymitars (without waiting the sentence of their heads of the law), and in a few moments cut him in pieces. The present Bassa has not dared to punish the murder; on the contrary, he affected to applaud the actors of it, as brave fellows, that knew how to do themselves justice. He takes all pretences of throwing money amongst the garrison, and suffers them to make little excursions into Hungary, where they burn some poor Rascian houses.

You may imagine, I cannot be very easy in a town which is really under the government of an insolent soldiery. We expected to be immediately dismissed, after a night's lodging here; but the Bassa detains us till he receives orders from Adrianople, which may, possibly, be a month a coming. In the mean time, we are lodged in one of the best

houses, belonging to a very considerable man amongst them, and have a whole chamber of Janizaries to guard us. My only diversion is the conversation of our host Achmet-beg, a title something like that of Count in Germany. His father was a great Bassa, and he has been educated in the most polite Eastern learning, being perfectly skilled in the Arabic and Persian languages, and an extraordinary scribe which they call *Effendi*. This accomplishment makes way to the greatest preferments; but he has had the good sense to prefer an easy, quiet, secure life, to all the dangerous honours of the Porte. He sups with us every night, and drinks wine very freely. You cannot imagine how much he is delighted with the liberty of conversing with me. He has explained to me many pieces of Arabian poetry, which, I observe, are in numbers, not unlike ours, generally of an alternate verse, and of a very musical sound. Their expressions of love are very passionate and lively. I am so much pleased with them, I really believe I should learn to read Arabic, if I was to stay here a few months. He has a very good library of their books of all kinds; and, as he tells me, spends the greatest part of his life there. I pass for a great scholar with him, by relating to him some of the Persian tales, which I find are genuine. At first, he believed I understood Persian. I have frequent disputes with him, concerning the difference of our customs, particularly the confinement of women. He assures me there is nothing at all in it; only, says he, we have the advantage, that when our wives cheat us, nobody knows it. He has wit, and is more polite than many Christian men of quality. I am very much entertained with him. He has had the curiosity to make one of our servants set him an alphabet of our letters, and can already write a good roman hand. But these amusements do not hinder my wishing heartily to be out of this place; though the weather is colder than I believe it ever was, any where but in Greenland. We have a very large stove constantly kept hot, and yet the windows of the room are frozen on the inside. God knows when I may have an opportunity of sending this letter; but I have written it, for the discharge of my own conscience; and you cannot now reproach me, that one of yours makes ten of mine. Adieu.

LETTER XXV.

Lady M. W. Montague to Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.*

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1717.

I HAVE now, Madam, finished a journey that has not been undertaken by any Christian since the time of the Greek emperors, and I shall not regret all the fatigues I have suffered in it, if it gives me an opportunity of amusing your R. H. by an account of places utterly unknown amongst us; the Emperor's Ambassadors, and those few English that have come hither, always going on the Danube to Nicopolis. But the river was now frozen, and Mr. W—— was so zealous for the service of his Majesty, that he would not defer his journey to wait for the conveniency of that passage. We crossed the deserts of Servia, almost quite over-grown with wood, though a country naturally fertile. The inhabitants are industrious; but the oppression of the peasants is so great, they are forced to abandon their houses, and neglect their tillage, all they have being a prey to the Janizaries, whenever they please to seize upon it. We had a guard of five hundred of them, and I was almost in tears every day to see their insolencies in the poor villages through which we passed.——After seven days travelling through thick woods, we came to Nissa, once the capital of Servia, situated in a fine plain on the river Nissava, in a very good air, and so fruitful a soil, that the great plenty is hardly credible. I was certainly assured, that the quantity of wine last vintage was so prodigious, that they were forced to dig holes in the earth to put it in, not having vessels enough in the town to hold it. The happiness of this plenty is scarce perceived by the oppressed people. I saw here a new occasion for my compassion. The wretches that had provided twenty waggons for our baggage from Belgrade hither for a certain hire, being all sent back without payment, some of their horses lamed, and

* The late Queen Caroline.

and ot'ers killed, without any satisfaction made for them. The poor fellows came round the house weeping and tearing their hair and beards in a most pitiful manner, without getting any thing but drubs from the insolent soldiers. I cannot express to your R. H. how much I was moved at this scene. I would have paid them the money out of my own pocket, with all my heart; but it would only have been giving so much to the Aga, who would have taken it from them without any remorse. After four days journey from this place over the mountains, we came to Sophia, situated in a large beautiful plain on the river Isca, and surrounded with distant mountains. It is hardly possible to see a more agreeable landscape. The city itself is very large, and extremely populous. Here are hot baths, very famous for their medicinal virtues.———Four days journey from hence we arrived at Philippopolis, after having passed the ridges between the mountains of Haemus and Rhodope, which are always covered with snow. This town is situated on a rising ground near the river Hebrus, and is almost wholly inhabited by Greeks; here are still some ancient Christian churches. They have a bishop; and several of the richest Greeks live here; but they are forced to conceal their wealth with great care, the appearance of poverty (which includes part of its inconveniences) being all their security against feeling it in earnest. The country from hence to Adrianople, is the finest in the world. Vines grow wild on all the hills, and the perpetual spring they enjoy makes every thing gay and flourishing. But this climate, happy as it seems, can never be preferred to England, with all its frosts and snows, while we are blessed with an easy government, under a King, who makes his own happiness consist in the liberty of his people, and chooses rather to be looked upon as their father than their master.——— This theme would carry me very far, and I am sensible I have already tired out your R. H.'s patience. But my letter is in your hands, and you may make it as short as you please, by throwing it into the fire, when weary of reading it. I am, Madam, with the greatest respect.

LETTER XXVI.

The same to the Lady ———.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1717.

I AM now got into a new world, where every thing I see appears to me a change of scene, and I write to your ladyship with some content of mind, hoping at least, that you will find the charm of novelty in my letters, and no longer reproach me that I tell you nothing extraordinary. I will not trouble you with a relation of our tedious journey; but I must not omit what I saw remarkable at Sophia, one of the most beautiful towns in the Turkish Empire, and famous for its hot baths, that are resorted to both for diversion and health. I stopped here one day, on purpose to see them; and designing to go *incognito*, I hired a Turkish coach. These voitures are not at all like ours, but much more convenient for the country, the heat being so great that glasses would be very troublesome. They are made a good deal in the manner of the Dutch stage-coaches, having wooden lattices painted with baskets and nosegays of flowers, intermixed commonly with little poetical mottos. They are covered all over with scarlet cloth, lined with silk, and very often richly embroidered and fringed. This covering entirely hides the persons in them, but may be thrown back at pleasure, and thus permit the ladies to peep through the lattices. They hold four people very conveniently, seated on cushions, but not raised.

In one of these covered waggons, I went to the Bagnio about ten o'clock. It was already full of women. It is built of stone, in the shape of a dome, with no windows but in the roof, which gives light enough. There were five of these domes joined together, the outmost being less than the rest, and serving only as a hall, where the portress stood at the door. Ladies of quality generally give this woman a crown or ten shillings, and I did not forget that ceremony. The next room is a very large one, paved with marble, and all round it are two raised sofas of marble, one above another. There were four fountains of cold water in this room, falling first into marble basons, and then running

running on the floor in little channels made for that purpose, which carried the streams into the next room, something less than this, with the same sort of marble sofas, but so hot with steams of sulphur, proceeding from the baths joining to it, it was impossible to stay there with one's clothes on. The two other domes were the hot baths, one of which had cocks of cold water turning into it, to temper it to what degree of warmth the bathers pleased to have.

I was in my travelling habit, which is a riding dress, and certainly appeared very extraordinary to them. Yet there was not one of them that shewed the least surprise or impertinent curiosity, but received me with all the obliging civility possible. I know no European court, where the ladies would have behaved themselves in so polite a manner to such a stranger. I believe, upon the whole, there were two hundred women, and yet none of those disdainful smiles, and satirical whispers, that never fail in our assemblies, when any body appears that is not dressed exactly in the fashion.

LETTER XXVII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. Chenevix, Lord Bishop of Waterford.

Dear Doctor, Spa, July 4, N. S. 1741.

IT was with real concern that I heard you were ill; and it is with equal truth that I hope this will find you perfectly recovered: that virtue, which makes you fit, and it may be willing, to die, makes those who are acquainted with it, as I am, unwilling you should; therefore take care of your health, and let it not be affected by a too great sensibility of those misfortunes that inseparably attend our state here. Do all you can to prevent them, but, when inevitable, bear them with resolution; this is the part I take with relation to my own health: I do all I can to retrieve and improve it; and if I acquire it, I will do all I can to preserve it; my bodily infirmities shall as little as possible affect my mind, and so far at least I will lessen the weight of them.

These waters have already done me so much good, that I have reason to expect a great deal more from them; and I expect still more benefit from passing my autumn afterwards in constant travelling through the south of France: thus you see I anticipate eventually the good, which is at least so much clear gain, let what will happen afterwards; do so too, dear Doctor, and be as well, and as happy, as you are sincerely wished to be by your most faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

The same to the same.

Hague, March 12, N. S. 1745.

I PUT nothing at the top of this letter, not knowing whether the familiar appellation of *dear Doctor* would now become me; because I hope that, by the time you receive this letter, you will be, as it were, my Lord of Clonfert. I have the pleasure of telling you, that I have this day recommended you to the King, for the bishopric of that name, now vacant by the translation of its last bishop to the see of Kildare. I hope my recommendation will not be refused, though I would not swear for it; therefore do not absolutely depend upon your consecration, and stay quietly where you are till you hear further from me. I assure you, I expect few greater pleasures in the remainder of my life, than that I now feel in rewarding your long attachment to me; and what I value still more, your own merits and virtues. Yours sincerely.

LETTER XXIX.

The same to the same.

Dear Doctor, Hague, April 27, N. S. 1745.

I TOLD you, at first, not to reckon too much upon the success of my recommendation; and I have still more reason to give you the same advice now, for it has met with great difficulties, merely as mine, and I am far from knowing yet how it will end. Pray, give no answer whatsoever to any body, that either writes or speaks to you upon that subject, but leave it to me, for I make it my own affair; and you shall have either the bishopric of Clonfert, or a better thing, or else I will not be lord lieutenant. I hope to be in England in about a fortnight

night, when this affair must and shall be brought to a decision*. Good-night to you. Yours.

LETTER XXX.

The same to the same.

My good Lord, Hague, May 12, N. S. 1745.

Now you are what I had positively declared you should be, a bishop; but it is bishop of Killaloe, not Clonfert, the latter refusing the translation. Killaloe, I am assured, is better. I heartily wish you joy, and could not refuse myself that pleasure, though I am in the greatest hurry imaginable, being upon my journey to Helvoet-Sluys for England. Adieu. Yours.

LETTER XXXI.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, June 18, 1747.

I THANK you for your letter and for your kind hint, and am heartily glad to hear that you have made up your affair with your predecessor's widow.

What becomes of your intended establishment at Waterford for the reception of foreigners†? Does it go on? It would be of great advantage to the town, and a good example to others. How does Mr. Smith's linen manufacture flourish with you? If it prospers, I should think it would both invite and employ foreigners. I wish my country people, for I look upon myself as an Irishman still, would but attend half as much to those useful objects, as they do to the glory of the militia and the purity of their claret. Drinking is a most beastly vice in every country, but it is really a ruinous one to Ireland: nine gentlemen in ten in Ireland are impoverished by the great quantity of claret, which, from mistaken notions of hospitality and dignity, they think it necessary should be drank in their houses; this expence leaves them no room to improve their estates, by proper indulgence upon proper conditions to their tenants, who must pay them to the full, and upon the very day, that they may pay their wine merchants.

There was a law in one of the ancient governments, I have forgot which‡, that empowered a man to kill his wife if she smelt of wine. I most sincerely wish that there was a law in Ireland, and better executed than most laws are, to empower the wives to kill their husbands in the like case; it would promote sobriety extremely, if the effects of conjugal affection were fully considered.

Do you grow fat? Are Mrs. Chenevix and your children all well? Are you as cheerful and as happy as your good conscience ought to make you? I hope them all; for, upon my word, nobody loves and values you more than your faithful friend and servant, &c.

* When the King refused his consent to the making me a bishop, he directed Lord Harrington, then secretary of state, to acquaint Lord Chesterfield that he would comply with his application in favour of any one, except me. His Lordship's answer, was, that he would not continue lord lieutenant of Ireland, except I had the vacant bishopric. One of the reasons given by his Majesty was, because he was told I wrote political pamphlets against the administration, which was absolutely false; for I declare in the most solemn manner, that I never wrote any pamphlet whatever; and I further declare, that Lord Chesterfield never employed me to negotiate for him any political transaction, though Sir Robert thought so, because I used to go to his Lordship every morning at eight o'clock, and had the honour to stay with him till he was dressed. In consequence of this, I was informed, upon the best authority, that a person used to follow me upon my going out of his Lordship's house; and as I sometimes went from Lord Chesterfield to Lord Scarborough, Sir Robert thought I carried messages from one to the other, which I never did. There was no occasion for my doing it, as Lord Scarborough made no secret of his going to Lord Chesterfield; for I have seen him myself go from his Lordship to Sir Robert, they living opposite to each other, in St. James's Square. Another reason the King gave for his refusal was, because Lord Scarborough had complained to him, with some warmth, of the little regard that had been shewed to his recommendation in my favour.

Perhaps another reason was, that his Majesty was glad to cross his Lordship's recommendation in my favour, knowing the great regard and affection he was so good to have for me.

From the Bishop of Waterford.

† That scheme, intended for the encouragement of French Protestants, did not answer the expectation of those who had formed it.

‡ It was that of the ancient Romans, that law, indeed, did not subsist long in all its severity; but even when the ladies had obtained the permission of drinking wine, they were punished for abusing that indulgence, and the wife of a senator having been convicted of drunkenness, was deprived of her marriage portion.

LETTER XXXII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, 1747*.

I AM very glad to hear of your safe arrival upon Irish ground, after your distresses upon the Irish seas: escapes always make people either much bolder or more timid than they were before; yours, I hope, will have the former of these effects, and encourage you rather to visit your friends in England.

I have been a country gentleman a great while, for me, that is; for I have now been a fortnight together at Blackheath, and stay there three or four days longer. The *furor hortensis* (garden-madness) has seized me, and my acre of ground here affords me more pleasure than kingdoms do to kings; for my object is not to extend, but to enrich it. My gardener calls me, and I must obey. Be as well and as cheerful as you can; and believe me most faithfully and truly yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Bath, March 1, 1748.

I THANK you for your kind letter, by which I am glad to find that you approve of my resignation, and of my resolution to enjoy the comforts of a private life: indeed, I had enough both of the pageantry and hurry of public life, to see their futility, and I withdraw from them *uti conviva satur* (as a satisfied guest). This conviction from experience secured me from regret: those who have only seen the gaudy outside of great stations, languish for their hidden charms, which in my mind soon satiate after possession†.

I am very glad to hear that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you and your family here this summer: I know that I cannot see a truer nor a warmer friend, which, I assure you, you may say too when you see me. I suppose that you will stop in your way in Nottinghamshire to see your son, whom as you return you will probably take with you to Ireland.

I have been here now a fortnight, and have found good by the waters; not that I had any great occasion for them, but, to say the truth, I came here chiefly to be out of the way of being talked to, and talked of, while my resignation was the only object of conversation in town.

Adieu, my dear Lord: I cannot tell you how sincerely and affectionately I am yours, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, Dec. 28, 1749.

THIS is to most people, and in most places, the season of lies, dignified and distinguished by the name of compliments; with me it is a season of truth, when I assure you that I wish you, and all who belong to you, whatever you wish for yourselves, or for each other, more particularly health, with which nobody need be unhappy.

Though you would not tell me how soon, and how generously you provided for Dr. Young's son‡, he did, and with all the professions of gratitude which he owed you. I am as much obliged to you as he can be; I am glad that the young man has a good character, which you know I made a *conditio sine qua non* of my request; and I hope that my recommendation interfered with no views of your own in favour of any other person.

Lord Scarborough's picture will be finished this week, and sent to Mrs. Chenevix; I think it is very well done, and indeed ought to be by the time Barret has taken to do it in; but he has taken it into his head, and I cannot say that I have discouraged him, that a great painter should also be a poet; that the same warmth of imagination equally forms both;

* This date is not in the hand of Lord Chesterfield, and I suspect it to be faulty.

† When I had the honour to see Lord Chesterfield some time after his resignation, one reason he told me why he was glad he had resigned, was because it was very difficult, in the public station he was in, to be entirely free from doing things that were not quite right.

Bishop of Waterford.

‡ I must observe here, that Lord Chesterfield never recommended any one to the ecclesiastical preferments in my gift but Mr. Young. When he did, it was in the handsomest manner, by telling me twice in his letter, "Remember that I do not "recommend, but if you approve of his character, "you will do a good-natured action."

Bishop of Waterford.

both; and consequently, when I expect him to bring me home a very good copy of a picture, he frequently brings an execrable copy of verses instead of it. The melon seeds shall go by the same opportunities of the picture and candlesticks, which I suppose will be time enough, since they are not to be sown till February.

I have not yet been able to get the workmen out of my house in town; and shall have the pleasure of their company some months longer. One would think that I liked them; for I am now full of them at Blackheath, where I am adding a gallery. *Il ne faut jamais faire les sottises à demi.* (Foolish things should never be done by halves.) I am, my dear Lord, most faithfully yours, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, November 30, 1751.

My reproach by Dr. Thomas, I insist upon it, was a very just one, and your excuse a very lame one: indifferent as I am grown about most things, you could not suppose that I was become so, where the health and happiness of you and your family were concerned; on the contrary, I find, that in proportion as one renounces public, one grows more sensible to private, social cares. My circle, thank God, is so much contracted, that my attention can, and does, from its centre extend itself to every point of the circumference. I am very glad to hear that your son goes on so well; and as he does go on so well, why should you move him? The Irish schools and universities are indisputably better than ours, with this additional advantage, that having him within your reach will be much better for him than a better place out of it: a man no more liveth by Latin and Greek, than by bread alone; but a father's care of his son's morals and manners is surely more useful, than the critical knowledge of Homer and Virgil, supposing that it were, which it very seldom is, acquired at schools: I do not therefore hesitate to advise you, to put your son to the best school, that is, the nearest to your usual place of residence, that you may see and examine him often and strictly, and watch his progress, not only in learning, but in morals and manners, instead of trusting to interested accounts of distant school-masters.

His Grace of Tuam's recovery has, I find, delayed, if not broke, a long chain of ecclesiastical promotions, of which the first link is the only one I interest myself in; I mean the translation of that good man and citizen, the Bishop of Meath*, to Tuam; the more he gets, the more Ireland gets; that being your case too, pray, how goes the copper mine? Fruitful, and yet inexhaustible, I hope. If it will but supply you with riches, I will answer for your making the best use of them.

I hear with great pleasure that Ireland improves daily, and that a spirit of industry spreads itself, to the great increase of trade and manufactures. I think I interest myself more in that country than in this; this is past its perfection, and seems gradually declining into weakness and caducity; that seems but tending to its vigour and perfection, and engages one's expectations and hopes; one loves a promising youth, one only esteems an old man; the former is a much quicker sentiment than the latter: both those sentiments conspire, I assure you, in forming that friendship with which I am, my dear Lord, your most faithful humble servant, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, May 22, 1752.

I am doubly concerned at Mrs. Chenevix's illness, for, while she is so ill, I am sure you cannot be well: though in some cases I would take Ward's remedy myself, I cannot recommend it to others: it has certainly done a great deal of good in many cases, in others it has sometimes done harm; he gives it indiscriminately in all, and consequently improperly in some; it is all one and the same medicine, though he gives it in different shapes, and calls it by different names, of drop, pill, and powder; the principle is known to be antimony; but in what manner prepared, nobody yet has been able to discover.

You are engaged in a most useful and charitable design, and I think that you and my friend the Bishop of Meath have begged

* Dr. Maul.

begged very successfully for the time; he is an old experienced beggar, and you cannot learn the mendicant trade under a better master; this undertaking is worthy of both your characters, and becomes you as men, citizens, and bishops. I desire that I may be upon your list of contributors; therefore pray lay down fifty pounds for me, and draw upon me for it by the very first opportunity. Private subscriptions can never extend this excellent scheme so far as it ought to be carried, though nothing but private subscriptions and diligence could have laid the foundation of it. You have made a beginning, which is often the greatest difficulty; and I think it is now impossible but that the government and parliament must carry it on. I will venture to say, that they have no object which so well deserves their attention. Could the government and parliament be brought to adopt this affair heartily, and push it effectually, a considerable sum ought to be granted for that particular purpose, as was done in England at the time of the great *réfuge* upon the revocation of the *édit de Nantes*. Lands too might be purchased, and houses and necessaries provided for the refugees in Kerry and in Connaught, near and under the protection of some of the barracks, which would greatly improve and civilize, and in time enrich, those two at present inhospitable and almost barbarous counties. The opportunity is now extremely favourable, while the weakness of the French government suffers the rage and fury of the clergy to drive such numbers of its subjects into other countries. I wish we could get them all into England and Ireland: that would be the true and justifiable way of promoting the Protestant interest, instead of following the example of the Papists, by persecuting them. *Est aliquid prodire tenus* (there is some merit in breaking the ice); you have that merit, and I dare say these new little colonies will thrive and extend to a certain degree, even should the government not think them worth its attention; but I hope it will.

I have been now confined near a month by a fall from my horse, which, though by good luck it neither broke nor dislocated any bone, bruised the muscles so much, that I have yet very little use of my leg; I can just hobble across my room with a stick, and that is all: but I have had, and still have, a much worse complaint, which is my deafness, for which I have yet found no relief, though I have tried a thousand infallible remedies: as soon as my lameness will allow me, I will go to Blackheath, and seek the refuge of a deaf man, reading and walking.

Lady Chesterfield sends her compliments to you and Mrs. Chenevix, at whose illness she is much concerned; she has sent you from Bristol a bust of your humble servant, cast from a marble one done by Mr. Hoare at Bath, for Mr. Adderly: it is generally thought very like. Adieu, my dear Lord. I am faithfully yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, London, July 14, 1752.

I KNOW the gentleness, the humanity, and the tenderness of your nature too well to doubt of your grief, and I know the object of it* too well to blame it; no, in such cases it is a commendable, not a blameable passion, and is always inseparable from a heart that is capable of friendship or love. I therefore offer you no trite and always unavailing arguments of consolation; but as any strong and prevailing passion is apt to make us neglect or forget for the time our most important duties, I must remind you of two in particular, the neglect of which would render your grief, instead of pious, criminal: I mean your duty to your children as a father, and to your diocese as a bishop. Your care of your children must be doubled, in order to repair as fast as possible their loss; and the public trust of your flock must not suffer from a personal and private concern. These incumbent and necessary duties will sometimes suspend, and at last mitigate, that grief, which I confess mere reason would not: they are equally moral and Christian duties, which I am sure no consideration upon earth will ever make you neglect. May your assiduous discharge of them insensibly lessen that affliction, which, if indulged, would prove as fatal to you and your family, as it must be vain and unavailing to her whose loss you justly lament!

* The death of Mrs. Chevenix, the Bishop's wife.

ment! I am with the greatest truth and affection, my dear Lord, your most faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Bath, Nov. 11, 1752.

THIS is only to ask you how you do, and what you do, in both which I need not tell you how truly I interest myself. The former depends a great deal upon the latter; if you are, alternately, attentively employed, and agreeably amused, you will probably, considering your sobriety and temperance, be in very good health. Your children are now old enough to answer both those ends. Their establishment should excite your attention; and their conversation and progressive improvement amuse your leisure hours. Your son is of an age to enable you to guess a little at his turn and disposition, and to direct his education accordingly. If you would have him be a very learned man, you must certainly send him to some great school; but if you would have him be a better thing, a very honest man, you should have him *à portée* of your own inspection. At those great schools, the heart is wholly neglected by those who ought to form it, and is consequently left open to temptations and ill examples: paternal care and inspection, attended by proper firmness and authority, may prevent great part of that mischief.

I had a letter the other day from Mr. Simond; by which I find, with great pleasure, that both the collection, and the objects of it, the refugees, increase daily. If the receiving and retrieving those poor people be, as it certainly is, both a moral and political duty, what must be the guilt and madness of those, who, by persecution for matters of mere speculation, force those poor people to carry their industry, their labour, their legs, their arms, to other people, and enrich other countries? I wonder the French government does not rather choose to burn them at home, than persecute them away into other countries; it would be full as just, and much more prudent.

These waters, which I have now used six weeks, in every way that it is possible to use them, drinking, bathing, and pumping, have done my hearing some good, but not enough to refit me for social life. I stay here a fortnight longer, in hopes of more benefit, which my physician promises me strongly: as I do not expect it, if I receive it, it will be the more welcome. If not, I have both philosophy and religion enough to submit to my fate, without either melancholy or murmur; for though I can by no means account why there is either moral or physical evil in the world, yet, conscious of the narrow bounds of human understanding, and convinced of the wisdom and justice of the eternal divine Being, who placed them here, I am persuaded, that it is fit and right that they should be here.

Adieu, my dear Lord: believe me most truly and affectionately your faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, Dec. 19, 1752.

I AM extremely glad to find, by your last very friendly letter, that you enjoy the greatest blessing of this life, the health of body and mind: proper exercise is necessary for both; go as little in your coach, and as much on foot as ever you can, and let your paternal and pastoral functions at once share and improve the health of your mind. The mind must have some worldly objects to excite its attention; otherwise it will stagnate in indolence, sink into melancholy, or rise into visions and enthusiasm. Your children cannot be in a better way than, by your account, they seem to be in at present: your son learns what a boy should learn; and your daughters read what girls should read, history; the former cannot know too much, and the latter ought not.

I am so weary of giving an account of my own wretched deafness, that I should not attempt it, did not I know that the kind interest which you take in whatever concerns me, makes you both desire and expect it. I am then neither better nor worse than when I wrote to you last; I have tried many things, and am going on to try many others, but without expecting any benefit from any medicine but patience. I am, my dear Lord, sincerely yours, &c.

LETTER XL.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, Bath, Nov. 14, 1754.

KNOWING, by long experience, the kind part you take in whatever concerns me, I delayed acknowledging your last letter, in hopes of being able, in some time, to give you a better account of my health than I could then have done. I had, just at that time, had a very severe return of my old vertiginous complaint, which, as usual, left my whole animal system weak and languid. The best air in England, which I take that of Blackheath to be, a strict regimen, and a proper degree of exercise, did not restore, I might almost say, revive me. I sought therefore for refuge here, and, thank God, I have not only found it, but in some measure recovery too. The disorders of my head and stomach are entirely removed by these waters, which I have now drank three weeks; so that I may reasonably hope, that the three weeks more, which I purpose passing here, will set me up for part of the winter at least, for at my age, and with my shattered constitution, I am not sillily sanguine enough to expect a radical cure. I consider myself here as an old decayed vessel, of long wear and tear, brought into the wet dock to be careened and patched up, not for any long voyage, but only to serve as a coaster for some little time longer. How long that may be, I little know, and as little care; I am unrelative to this world, and this world to me. My only attention now is to live, while I do live in it, without pain; and when I leave it, to leave it without fear.

I hope that you, your young family, and *tutti quanti*, are all well. May you long continue so! I am, my dear Lord, your most faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER LXI.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, June 26, 1755.

COULD I take any thing ill of you, who I am sure never meaned any to me or any man living, it would be your suspecting that I did; which I believe is the first unjust suspicion that ever you entertained of any body: and I am the more concerned at it, because I know that it gave you uneasiness. I confess myself four letters in your debt; but, to tell you the truth, I have of late contracted so many debts of that kind, that I am very near a bankruptcy, though not a fraudulent one, upon my word; for I will honestly declare my circumstances; and then my creditors will, I dare say, compound with me upon reasonable terms. White told you true, when he told you that I was well, by which he meaned all that he could know, which was, that I had no immediate illness; but he did not know the inward feelings, which increasing deafness and gradually declining health occasion. Some time before I left London I had a severe return of my old complaints in my head and stomach, which are always followed by such weakness and langnors, that I am incapable of any thing but reading, and that too in an idle and desultory manner. Writing seems to be acting, as was asserted in the case of Algernon Sidney, which my *vis inertiæ* will not suffer me to undertake, and I put it off from day to day, as Felix did Paul, to a more convenient season. When I removed to this place, I flattered myself that the purity of the air, and the exercise of riding, which it would tempt me to take, would restore me to such a degree of health, strength, and consequently spirits, as to enable me not only to discharge my epistolary debts, but also to amuse myself with writing some essays and historical tracts. I was soon disappointed; for I had not been here above ten days, when I had a stronger attack than my former, and which, I believe, would have been the final one, had I not very seasonably been let blood. From that time, though, as they call it, recovered, I have more properly crawled, than walked among my fellow vegetables, breathed than existed, and dreamed than thought. This, upon my word, is the true and only cause of my long silence; I begin to regain ground a little, but indeed very slowly.

As to the letter which you feared might have displeased me, I protest, my dear Lord, I looked upon it as the tenderest mark of your friendship; I had given occasion to it, and I expected it both from your affection and your character. Those reflections are never improper, though

though too often unwelcome, and consequently useless in youth; but I am now come to a time of life both to make and receive them with satisfaction, and therefore I hope with utility. One cannot think of one's own existence, without thinking of the eternal Author of it; and one cannot consider his physical or moral attributes, without some fear, though in my mind still more hopes. It is true, we can have no adequate notions of the attributes of a being so infinitely superior to us; but according to the best notions which we are capable of forming of his justice and mercy, the latter, which is the comfortable scale, seems necessarily to preponderate. Your quotation from archbishop Tillotson contains a fair and candid account of the Christian religion; and, had his challenge been accepted, he would certainly have had an easy victory. He was certainly the most gentle and candid of all churchmen of any religion. *Un esprit de corps* is too apt, though I believe often unperceived, to bias their conduct, and inflame an honest, though too intemperate, zeal. It is the same in every society of men; for it is in human nature to be affected and warped by examples and numbers: you are, without a compliment, the only one that I know untainted.

To descend to this world, and particularly to that part of it where you reside, your present state seems to me an awkward one; your late ferment seems rather suspended than quieted; and I think I see matter for a second fermentation, when your parliament meets. Some, I believe, will ask too much; and others perhaps will grant too little. I wish both parties may be wiser and honester, and then they will be quieter than they have been of late. Both sides would be highly offended, if one were to advise them to apply themselves to civil matters only, in the limited sense of that word; I mean, trade, manufactures, good domestic order, subordination, &c. and not to meddle so much with politics, in which I cannot help saying they are but bunglers. No harm is intended them from hence; and, if they will be quiet, no harm will be done them. The people have liberty enough, and the crown has prerogative enough. Those are the real enemies to Ireland, who would enlarge either at the expence of the other, and who have started points that ought never to have been mentioned at all, but which will now perpetually recur.

By this time, I fear, I have tired you; but, I am sure, that in half this time I should have been tired with writing half so much to any body else. Adieu then, my dear Lord; and be convinced that, while I am at all, I shall be, with the truest esteem and affection, your most faithful friend and servant, &c.

I hope the young family continues to be well, and to do well.

LETTER XLII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, Aug. 30, 1755.

I CONFESS myself in every respect a very bad correspondent. My heart only does its duty; but my head and hand often refuse to do theirs. You, I am sure, are charitable enough to every body, and just enough to me, to accept of intentions instead of actions. Besides, I must acquaint you, that I have of late had a great deal more on my hands, than I either cared or was fit for. *L'Academie des belles lettres* at Paris having, God knows why, associated me to their body; in return to this unexpected and undeserved compliment, I have been obliged to write many letters to individuals, and one to the *academie en corps*, (academic body), which was to be a kind of speech; and I fear it was of the very worst kind, for I have been long disused to compliments and declamations.

These last six weeks my state of health has been rather better, though by no means good; and, if I can but weather out the next month tolerably, I am morally sure of being better the two following months, which I shall pass at Bath; for those waters always prove a temporary, though never a radical or permanent, cure of my complaints. However, *c'est autant de gagné* (it is so much clear gain), and that is worth the trouble of the journey.

Hawkins brought me the other day your kind present of Dr. Seed's sermons. I have read some of them, and like them very well. But I have neither read nor intend to read those which are meant to prove the existence of God; because it seems to me too great a disparagement

of that reason which he has given us, to require any other proofs of his existence, than those which the whole and every part of the creation afford us. If I believe my own existence, I must believe his: it cannot be proved *à priori* as some have idly attempted to do, and cannot be doubted of *à posteriori*. Cato says very justly, *And that he is, all nature cries aloud.*

By what I hear from Ireland, the ferment does not seem to subside hitherto, but rather to increase. However, I cannot help thinking but that things will go quietly enough in the next session of parliament. The castle will, I take it for granted, some how or other, procure a majority, which when the patriots perceive, they will probably think half a loaf better than no bread, and come into measures. I wish for the sake of Ireland, that they may; for I am very sure that, while these squabbles subsist, the public good never enters into the head of either party.

However your public affairs may go, I am very glad to find that your private ones go so well, and that your children answer your care and expectations. May you long contribute mutually to your respective happiness! Yours most faithfully, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, Bath, Oct. 8, 1755.

I RECEIVED your last kind letter but the day before I was to leave Blackheath and set out for this place, where I have now been just a fortnight. In one respect, I am the better for that fortnight, I mean with regard to my stomach, or more properly my digestion, for I do not care two-pence whether I eat or not; but I care much to digest what I do eat, which I have not done the last three months, and now do. *D'ailleurs*, I am, what you call in Ireland; and a very good expression I think it is, *unwell*. This *unwellness* affects the mind as well as the body, and gives them both a disagreeable inertness. I force my body into action, and take proper exercise; but there is no forcing the mind, and all attempts of that kind are at least ineffectual, but oftener disgraceful.

You will be convinced of that truth, when I send you a copy of my letter to *l'académie des belles lettres*. It was wrote *invita Minerva*, and is the poor offspring of a rape upon my reluctant mind. I had not time to have it copied for you before I came here, and forgot to bring it with me, but when I return to London I will send you a copy.

I am heartily glad that your quarrels are at last made up in Ireland; but I am glad from a very different motive from most other people's. I am glad of it for the sake of the country, which I fear was the least concern of either of the belligerent parties. The triumph of the patriots is complete, and the power is now theirs; with all my heart, let them but use it well.

There is a great deal of money lying dead in the treasury: let them apply that to real public uses. Let them encourage the extension and improvement of their manufactures, the cultivation of their lands, and above all, the protestant charter-schools. Let them people and civilize the country, by establishing a fund to invite and provide for protestant strangers. Let them make Connaught and Kerry know that there is a God, a king, and a government, three things to which they are at present utter strangers. These and other such kind of measures would make them patriots indeed, and give them just weight and reputation. They have got their own sops, and have now leisure to think of the public, if they please.

I propose staying here a month or six weeks longer, or even more, if I think that the waters will do more for me. All places are now alike to me, as I carry my own solitude with me wherever I go. Adieu, my dear lord. Yours most faithfully, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, Dec. 15, 1755.

I BROUGHT with me from Bath rather a little more health than I carried with me there, but full as much deafness; and this is all the answer I can make to your last kind inquiries. This, you see, is a state rather of suffering, than enjoying life; and indeed I am very weary of it; but, thank God, *ennui* is not, as it commonly is, attended with melancholy; and during the rest of my journey, I shall rather sleep in the *voiture* (carriage) than be restless and uneasy, as most travellers are.

I can-

I cannot find here the only copy which I had kept of my letter to *l'academie des belles lettres*; but Mr. Bristow took one over with him to Ireland, which I dare say he will readily shew you, and you may signify my consent to it, by shewing him this part of my letter. When you do see it, you will find that its only merit is its being pretty correct French, and that it has no intrinsic right to be reckoned among *les belles lettres*.

Que le chien mange le loup, ou que le loup mange le chien (let the dog devour, or be devoured by, the wolf), either in Ireland or here, is to me matter of great indifference, provided that those who govern either kingdom would but, at their leisure moments, and when they have nothing better to do, a little consider the public good; for, after all, there is such a thing as public good, though in general people seem not to think so. I am not Utopian enough to propose that it should interfere with private interest; but, perhaps, if duly considered, it might appear in some few cases to coincide with, and promote it.

Sheridan has lately published here an excellent book, entitled *British Education*. Warmed with his subject, he pushes it rather too far, as all authors do the particular object that has struck their imagination; and he is too diffuse; but, upon the whole, it is both a very useful and entertaining book. When you see it, you will perhaps think that I am bribed by the dedication, to say what I now say of it, for he lays me on thick; but that, upon my word, is not the case. The truth is, that the several situations which I have been in, having made me long the *plastron* of dedications, I am become as callous to flattery as some people are to abuse.

I think your brother would be much in the wrong to quit his present commission of lieutenant-colonel to an old regiment of horse, for a new-raised regiment of foot, which, with twenty others, would, I hope, be very soon broke. The extravagant and groundless, though general, fears of an invasion from France, justify to the timid public the present military phrenzy; but, as I am convinced that the former will soon vanish, it is to be hoped the latter will soon after subside. This, at least, I am very sure of, that we shall not be able to pay three years longer the number of troops which we now have in our pay.

Make my compliments to your young family; and be assured that I am most faithfully and sincerely yours, &c.

LETTER XLV.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, July 15, 1756.

IT is not without doing some violence to my weak hand, and weaker head, that I attempt to satisfy your friendly anxiety about my health. I still crawl upon the face of the earth, neither worse nor better than I was some months ago, weary of, but not murmuring at, my disagreeable situation. Speaking tires and exhausts me; and as for hearing, I have none left; so that I am *isolé* in the midst of my friends and acquaintance; but, as I have had much more than my share of the good things of this world in the former part of my life, I neither do, nor ought, to complain of the change which I now experience. I will make the best use I can of this wretched remnant of my life, and atone, as well as I can, for the abuse of the whole piece, by wishing that I had employed it better.

I hope your children continue to deserve well all your tenderness: that you may have that and every other happiness, is the sincere wish of your faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, Oct. 11, 1756.

WHAT can a hermit send you from the deserts of Blackheath, in return for your kind letter, but his hearty thanks? I see nobody here by choice, and I hear nobody any where by fatal necessity; and as for the thoughts of a deaf, solitary, sick man, they cannot be entertaining for one in health, as I hope you are. Those thoughts which relate to you are such as you would desire, that is, such as you deserve. My others seem to be a succession of dreams, but with this comfortable circumstance, that I have no gloomy ones. No passions agitate me, no fears disturb me, and no silly hopes gull me any longer. I have done with this world, and think of my journey to another, which I believe is not very remote. In the mean time, I shall next

week take one to Bath, which the skilful say may perhaps do me good; *à la bonne heure*, I will try. I only ask for negative health; and if those waters will procure me that, I shall be abundantly satisfied.

I think you have taken a very prudent resolution with regard to your approaching election.

My friend George Faulkner dined with me here one day; he tells me that reading is not yet come in fashion in Ireland, and that more bottles are bought in one week, than books in one year. Adieu, my dear Lord; it is impossible to be more truly and faithfully than I am yours.

LETTER XLVII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, Bath, Nov. 22, 1757.

I SHALL make but a very unsatisfactory return to your kind inquiries and solicitude about my health, when I tell you, that but three days ago I had a very strong attack of my usual illness, which has left me still weak and languid. I thought myself the better for the waters, which I have drank a month, till this relapse came and undeceived me. All mineral waters, and the whole *materia medica*, lose their efficacy upon my shattered carcass, and the enemy within is too hard for them. I bear it all with patience, and without melancholy, beaause I must bear it whether I will or no. Physical ills are the taxes laid upon this wretched life; some are taxed higher, and some lower, but all pay something. My philosophy teaches me to reflect, how much higher, rather than how much lower, I might have been taxed. How gentle are my physical ills, compared with the exquisite torments of gout, stone, &c.! The faculties of my mind are, thank God, not yet much impaired; and they comfort me in my worst moments, and amuse me in the best.

I read with more pleasure than ever; perhaps, because it is the only pleasure I have left. For, since I am struck out of living company by my deafness, I have recourse to the dead, whom alone I can hear; and I have assigned them their stated hours of audience. Solid *folios* are the people of business, with whom I converse in the morning. *Quartos* are the easier mixed company, with whom I sit after dinner; and I pass my evenings in the light, and often frivolous, *chit-chat* of small *octavos* and *duodecimos*. This, upon the whole, hinders me from wishing for death, while other considerations hinder me from fearing it.

Does lord Clanbrazil bring in his register bill this session? If he can keep it short, clear, and mild, it will be in my opinion a very good one. Some time or other, though God knows when, it will be found out in Ireland, that the popish religion and influence cannot be subdued by force, but may be undermined and destroyed by art. Allow the papists to buy lands, let and take leases equally with the protestants, but subject to the *gavel* act, which will always have its effect upon their posterity at least. Tie them down to the government by the tender but strong bonds of landed property, which the pope will have much ado to dissolve, notwithstanding his power of loosening and binding. Use those who come over to you, though perhaps only seemingly at first, well and kindly, instead of looking for their cloven feet and their tails, as you do now. Increase both your number and your care of the Protestant charter-schools. Make your penal laws extremely mild, and then put them strictly in execution.

Hæ tibi erunt artes.
(These will be your arts.)

This would do in time, and nothing else will, nor ought. I would as soon murder a man for his estate, as prosecute him for his religious and speculative errors; and since I am in a way of quoting verses, I will give you three out of Walsh's famous ode to King William:

Nor think it a sufficient cause,
To punish men by penal laws,
For not believing right.

I am very glad that your daughter is recovered. I am glad that you are well, and whatever you are glad of will, upon my word, gladden your faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, Jan. 22, 1760.

WHEN I received your last letter, I was not in a condition to answer, and hardly to read it; I was so extremely ill, that

that I little thought that I should live to the date of this letter. I have within these few months more than once seen death very near; and when one does see it near, let the best or the worst people say what they please, it is a very serious consideration. I thank God, I saw it with out very great terrors; but at the same time, the divine attribute of mercy, which gives us comfort, cannot make us forget, nor ought it, his attribute of justice, which must blend some fears with our hopes. The faculty tell me that I am now much better, and to be sure I am so, compared with what I was a fortnight ago; but, however, still in a very weak and lingering condition, not likely in my opinion to hold out long; but, whether my end be more or less remote; I know I am tottering upon the brink of this world, and my thoughts are employed about the other. However, while I crawl upon this planet, I think myself obliged to do what good I can, in my narrow domestic sphere, to my fellow-creatures, and to wish them all the good I cannot do. What share you will always have in those wishes, our long friendship, and your own merit, which I have so long known, will best tell you.

I am, with great truth and just esteem, your most faithful friend and servant, &c.

LETTER XLIX.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, Aug. 28, 1760.

I SHOULD have answered your last and most friendly letter sooner, but that the weak and languid state which I have been in for some time did not leave me spirits to do any thing, much less any thing well. What was unjustly and infamously urged against Algernon Sidney, I found too true in my own case, that *scribere est agere* (writing is acting), and therefore I did not undertake it. I am now a little better, but this better moment is no security that the next will not be a very bad one, for I am more than *journalier* in my complaints, even hours make great variations in them. This, you must allow, is an unfortunate latter end of my life, and consequently a tiresome one; but I must own too, that perhaps it is a very just one, and a sort of balance to the tumultuous and imaginary pleasures of the former part of it. In the general course of things there seems to be, upon the whole, a pretty equal distribution of physical good and evil, some extraordinary cases excepted; and even moral good and evil seem mixed to a certain degee; for one never sees any body so perfectly good, or so perfectly bad, as they might be. Why this is so, it is vain for us upon this planet to inquire, for it is not given us yet to know. I behold it with a respectful admiration, and cry out, *O altitudo!*

White told me that you intend to turn gardener, and that your first trial is to be raising of melons; for which reason I have sent you such a provision of good melon-seed of different kinds, as will serve you, your *nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis* (your children's children, and those that will be born of them); but, as an older and more experienced gardener than you are, I must add some instructions as to their culture. Know then, that they are much better raised in tanner's bark than in dung; that you should put but two seeds in what the gardeners call a light; and, that when they are about half-grown, if the weather is hot, you should cover them with oiled paper, instead of glass, to save the vines from being burned up before the fruit is ripe. I, and most people here, prefer the canteloupes, but they are not the best bearers.

I am very glad that your son does hitherto so well at the university, and there is no doubt of his continuing to do so, provided he keeps clear of the epidemical vices of colleges in general, and of Irish colleges in particular. You may easily guess that I mean that beastly degrading vice of drinking, which increases with years, and which ends in stupid sottishness. I hope all the rest of your family are as well as I wish them; for, upon my word, I sincerely wish you all *tutti quanti* as well as you can wish yourselves. I am, my dear Lord, your faithful friend and humble servant.

LETTER L.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. R. C——.

My dear Lord, London, Dec. 16, 1760.

I MAKE no excuses for the irregularity of my correspondence, or the unfre-

quency of my letters; for my declining mind keeps pace with my decaying body, and I can no more *scribere digna legi* (write things worthy to be read), than I can *facere digna scribi* (do things worthy to be written). My health is always bad, though sometimes better, and sometimes worse, but never good. My deafness increases, and consequently deprives me of the comforts of society, which other people have in their illnesses; in short, this last stage of my life is a very tedious one, and the roads very bad; the end of it cannot be very far off, and I cannot be sorry for it. I wait for it, imploring the mercy of my Creator, and deprecating his justice. The best of us must trust to the former, and dread the latter. I am, &c.

LETTER LI.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, Sept. 12, 1761.

I do not know whether I shall give you a reason which you will reckon a good one; but I will honestly give you the true one, for my writing so seldom. It is one of the effects, and not the least disagreeable one, of my disorder, to make one indolent, and unwilling to undertake even what one has a mind to do. I have often set down in the intention of writing to you, when the apparatus of a table, pen, ink, and paper, has discouraged me, and made me procrastinate, and say, like Festus, "At a convenient time will I speak to thee." Those who have not experienced this indolence and languor, I know have no conception of them; and therefore, many people say that I am extremely well, because I can walk and speak, without knowing how much it costs me to do either. This was the case of the bishop of Ossory, who reported only from my outside, which is not much altered. I cannot say, however, that I am positively ill; but I can positively say, that I am always *unwell*. In short, I am in my health, what many, reckoned in the main good sort of people, are in their morals; they commit no flagrant crimes, but their conscience secretly reproaches them with the non-observance or the violation of many lesser duties. White is recovered from his acute illness, and is now only infirm and crazy, and will be so as long as he lives. I believe we shall start fair.

The bishop of Ossory told me one thing, that I heard with great pleasure; which was, that your son did extremely well at the university, and answered, not only your hopes, but your wishes; I sincerely congratulate you upon it.

The town of London and the city of Westminster are gone quite mad with the wedding and the approaching coronation. People think nor talk of nothing else. For my part, I have not seen our new queen yet; and as for the coronation, I am not alive enough to march, nor dead enough to *walk* at it. You can bear now and then a quibble, I hope; but I am, without the least *équivoque*, my dear lord, your most faithful friend, and humble servant.

P. S. Your lord lieutenant will be with you immediately after the coronation. He has heard of combinations, confederations, and all sorts of *ations*, to handcuff and fetter him; but he seems not in the least apprehensive of them.

LETTER LII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, Blackheath, Oct. 1, 1764.

I have been a long time in your debt, but I hope that my age and infirmities give me some privileges to compensate a little for the loss of youth and health. I am past the age at which a Roman soldier was *rude donatus*, which some have translated, *given to be rude*. I adopt that version. Since your friendship for me makes you solicitous to have accounts of my health, I will tell you that I am neither better nor worse than when you heard from me last. I am never free from physical ills of one kind or another, but use and patience make them supportable; and I own this obligation to them, that they have cured me of worse ills than themselves. I mean moral ills, for they have given me leisure to examine and reflection to subdue, all my passions. I think only of doing my duty to my Creator, and to my fellow created beings, and *omnis in hoc sum* (this is my only object).

Are you a grandfather in embryo yet? That ought by this time to be manifest.

When

When you shall be really so, may your grand-children give you as much satisfaction as your own children have done!

Good night, my dear lord, I am most affectionately yours.

LETTER LIII.

The same to the same.

My dear Lord, London, Dec. 10, 1771.

I AM sure you will believe me when I tell you that I am sincerely sorry for your loss, which I received the account of yesterday, and upon which I shall make you none of the trite compliments of condolence. Your grief is just; but your religion, of which I am sure you have enough (with the addition of some philosophy), will make you keep it within due bounds, and leave the rest to time and avocations. When your son was with me here, just before he embarked for France, I plainly saw that his consumption was too far gone to leave the least hopes of a cure; and, if he had dragged on this wretched life some few years longer, that life could have been but trouble and sorrow to you both. This consideration alone should mitigate your grief, and the care of your grandson will be a proper avocation from it. Adieu, my dear lord. May this stroke of adversity be the last you may ever experience from the hand of providence!

Yours most affectionately and sincerely, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Dr. Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield.

My Lord, November 10, 1730.

I WAS positively advised by a friend, whose opinion has much weight with me, and who has a great veneration for your lordship, to venture a letter of solicitation: and it is the first request of this kind that I ever made since the public changes, in times, persons, measures, and opinions, drove me into distance and obscurity.

There is an honest man, whose name is Launcelot; he has been long a servant to my lord Sussex: he married a relation of mine, a widow, with a tolerable jointure; which depending upon a lease which the duke of Grafton suffered to expire about three years ago, sunk half her little fortune. Mr. Launcelot had many promises from the duke of Dorset, while his grace held that office which is now in your lordship; but they all failed, after the usual fate that the bulk of court-suiters must expect.

I am very sensible that I have no manner of claim to the least favour from your lordship, whom I have hardly the honour to be known to, although you were always pleased to treat me with much humanity, and with more distinction than I could pretend to deserve. I am likewise conscious of that demerit which I have largely shared with all those who concerned themselves in a court and ministry, whose maxims and proceedings have been ever since so much exploded. But your lordship will grant me leave to say, that, in those times, when any persons of the ejected party came to court, and were of tolerable consequence, they never failed to succeed in any reasonable request they made for a friend. And, when I sometimes added my poor solicitations, I used to quote the then ministers a passage in the Gospel, *the poor* (meaning their own dependants) *you have always with you*, &c.

This is the strongest argument I have, to entreat your lordship's favour for Mr. Launcelot, who is a perfect honest man, and as loyal as you could wish. His wife, my near relation, has been my favourite from her youth, and as deserving as it is possible for one of her level. It is understood, that some little employments about the court may be often in your lordship's disposal; and that my lord Sussex will give Mr. Launcelot the character he deserves; and then let my petition be (to speak in my own trade) a drop in the bucket.

Remember, my lord, that, although this letter be long, yet what particularly concerns my request is but of a few lines.

I shall not congratulate with your lordship upon any of your present great employments, or upon the greatest that can possibly be given to you; because you are one of those very few, who do more honour to a court, than you can possibly receive from it, which I take to be a greater compliment to a court than it is to your lordship. I am, my lord, &c.

LETTER LV.

The Earl of Chesterfield to Dr. Swift.

Sir, Hague, Dec. 15, N. S. 1730.

You need not have made any excuse to me for your solicitation: on the contrary, I am proud of being the first person to whom you have thought it worth the while to apply since those changes, which, you say, drove you into distance and obscurity. I very well know the person you recommend to me, having lodged at his house a whole summer at Richmond. I have always heard a very good character of him, which alone would incline me to serve him; but your recommendation, I can assure you, will make me impatient to do it. However, that he may not again meet with the common fate of court-suitors, nor I lie under the imputation of making court-promises, I will exactly explain to you how far it is likely I may be able to serve him.

When first I had this office, I took the resolution of turning out nobody; so that I shall only have the disposal of those places that the death of the present possessors will procure me. Some old servants, that have served me long and faithfully, have obtained the promises of the first four or five vacancies; and the early solicitations of some of my particular friends have tied me down for about as many more. But after having satisfied these engagements, I do assure you, Mr. Launcelot shall be my first care. I confess, his prospect is more remote than I could have wished it; but, as it is so remote, he will not have the uneasiness of a disappointment, if he gets nothing; and if he gets something, we shall both be pleased.

As for his political principles, I am in no manner of pain about them. Were he a Tory, I would venture to serve him, in the just expectation that, should I ever be charged with having preferred a Tory, the person who was the author of my crime, would likewise be the author of my vindication. I am, with real esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

LETTER LVI.

Dean Swift to the Earl of Chesterfield.

My Lord, January 15, 1730-1.

I RETURN your lordship my most humble thanks for the honour and favour of your letter, and desire your justice to believe, that, in writing to you a second time, I have no design of giving you a second trouble. My only end at present is to beg your pardon for a fault of ignorance. I ought to have remembered, that the arts of courts are like those of play; where, if the most expert be absent a few months, the whole system is so changed, that he hath no more skill than a new beginner. Yet I cannot but wish, that your lordship had pleased to forgive one who has been an utter stranger to public life above sixteen years. Bussy Rabutin himself, the politest person of his age, when he was recalled to court after a long banishment, appeared ridiculous there: and what could I expect from my antiquated manner of addressing your lordship in the prime of your life, in the height of fortune, favour, and merit; so distinguished by your active spirit, and greatness of your genius? I do here repeat to your lordship, that I lay the fault of my misconduct entirely on a friend whom I exceedingly love and esteem, whom I dare not name, and who is as bad a courtier by nature as I am grown by want of practice. God forbid that your lordship should continue in an employment, however great and honourable, where you only can be an ornament to the court so long, until you have an opportunity to provide offices for a dozen low people, like the poor man whom I took the liberty to mention! And God forbid, that, in one particular branch of the king's family, there should ever be such a mortality, as to take away a dozen of meaner servants in less than a dozen years!

Give me leave, in further excuse of my weakness, to confess, that, besides some hints from my friends, your lordship is in great measure to blame, for your obliging manner of treating me in every place where I had the honour to see you; which I acknowledge to have been a distinction that I had not the least pretence to, and consequently as little to ground upon it the request of a favour.

As

As I am an utter stranger to the present forms of the world, I have imagined more than once, that your lordship's proceeding with me may be a refinement introduced by yourself; and that as, in my time, the most solemn and frequent promises of great men usually failed, against all probable appearances, so that single slight one of your lordship may, by your generous nature, early succeed against all visible impossibilities*. I am, &c.

LETTER LVII.

John Dunning, Esq. to a Gentleman of the Inner Temple; containing Directions to the Student.

Dear Sir, Lincoln's-Inn, March 3, 1779.

THE habits of intercourse in which I have lived with your family, joined to the regard which I entertain for yourself, make me solicitous, in compliance with your request, to give you some hints concerning the study of the law.

Our profession is generally ridiculed as being dry and uninteresting; but a mind anxious for the discovery of truth and information, will be amply gratified for the toil, in investigating the origin and progress of a jurisprudence, which has the good of the people for its basis, and the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages for its improvement. Nor is the study itself so intricate as has been imagined; more especially since the labours of some modern writers have given it a more regular and scientific form. Without industry, however, it is impossible to arrive at any eminence in practice; and the man who shall be bold enough to attempt excellence by abilities alone, will soon find himself foiled by many who have inferior understandings, but better attainments. On the other hand, the most painful plodder can never arrive at celebrity by mere reading; a man calculated for success, must add to native genius an instinctive faculty in the discovery and retention of that knowledge only, which can be at once useful and productive.

I imagine that a considerable degree of learning is absolutely necessary. The elder authors frequently wrote in Latin, and the foreign jurists continue the practice to this day. Besides this, classical attainments contribute much to the refinement of the understanding, and embellishment of the style. The utility of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, are known and felt by every one. Geometry will afford the most apposite examples of close and pointed reasoning; and geography is so very necessary in common life, that there is less credit in knowing, than dishonour in being unacquainted with it. But it is history, and more particularly that of his own country, which will occupy the attention, and attract the regard of the great lawyer. A minute knowledge of the political revolutions and judical decisions of our predecessors, whether in the more ancient or modern æras of our government, is equally useful and interesting. This will include a narrative of all the material alterations in the common law, and the reasons; and I would always recommend a diligent attendance on the courts of justice; as by that means the practice of them (a circumstance of great moment) will be easily and naturally acquired. Besides this, a much stronger impression will be made on the mind by the statement of the case, and the pleadings of the counsel, than from a cold uninteresting detail of it in a report. But above all, a trial at bar, or a special argument, should never be neglected. As it is usual on these occasions to take notes, a knowledge of short-hand will give such facility to your labours, as to enable you to follow the most rapid speaker with certainty and precision. Common-place books are convenient and useful; and as they are generally lettered, a reference may be had to them in a moment. It is usual to acquire some insight into real business, under an eminent special pleader, previous to actual practice at the bar: this idea I beg leave strongly to second, and indeed I have known but a few great men who have not possessed this advantage. I here subjoin a list of books necessary for your perusal and instruction, to which I have added some remarks; and wishing that you may add to a successful practice, that integrity which can alone

* And so it did; Lord Chesterfield having soon found an opportunity of providing for the person recommended by Dean Swift.

alone make you worthy of it, I remain &c. &c.

* Read Hume's History of England, particularly observing the rise, progress, and declension of the feudal system. Minutely attend to the Saxon government that preceded it, and dwell on the reigns of Edward I. Henry VI. Henry VII. Henry VIII. James I. Charles I. Charles II. and James II.

Blackstone. On the second reading turn to the references.

Mr. Justice Wright's learned Treatise on Tenures.

Coke Littleton, especially every word of Fee-Simple, Fee-Tail, and Tenant in Tail.

Coke's Institutes; more particularly the Ist and IId; and Serjeant Hawkins's Compendium.

Coke's Reports—Plowden's Commentary—Bacon's Abridgement; and First Principles of Equity—Pigott on Fines—Reports of Croke, Burrow, Raymond, Saunders, Strange, and Peere Williams —Paley's Maxims—Lord Bacon's Elements of the Common Law.

LETTER LVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.*

Dear Sir, Sept. 25, 1750.

You have, as I find, by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother, and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother now eighty-two years of age, whom therefore I must soon lose, unless it please God that she rather should mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mr. Strahan; and think I do myself honour when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to me nor to you of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lamenting our deprivation. The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another, is to guard and incite, and elevate his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful and wise; innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts: and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is indeed of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God: yet surely there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable, that union which has received the divine approbation, shall continue to eternity.

There is one expedient, by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from your earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come: for all comfort and all satisfaction is sincerely wished you by, dear Sir, your, &c.

* Translator of Martial, Bossuet, &c. and formerly master of an academy at Kensington.

LETTER LIX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir,

I CANNOT but confess the failure of my correspondence; but hope the same regard which you express for me, on every other occasion, will incline you to forgive me. I am often, very often ill, and when I am well, am obliged to work; but, indeed, have never much used myself to punctuality. You are, however, not to make such kind of inferences, when I forbear to reply to your kindness; for be assured, I never receive a letter from you without great pleasure, and

and a very warm sense of your generosity and friendship, which I heartily blame myself for not cultivating with more care. In this, as in many other cases, I go wrong in opposition to conviction; for I think scarce any temporal good equally to be desired with the regard and familiarity of worthy men, and hope we shall be sometime nearer to each other, and have a more ready way of pouring out our hearts.

I am glad that you still find encouragement to persevere in your publication*, and shall beg the favour of six more volumes to add to my former six, when you can with any convenience send them me. Please to present a set in my name to Mr. Ruddiman†, of whom I hear that his learning is not his highest excellence.

I have transcribed the mottos, and returned them, I hope not too late, of which I think many very happily performed. Mr. Cave has put the last in the Magazine‡, in which I think he did well. I beg of you to write soon, and to write often, and to write long letters; which I hope in time to repay you, but you must be a patient creditor. I have, however, this of gratitude, that I think of you with regard, when I do not perhaps give the proofs which I ought of piety. Sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, &c.

LETTER LX.

Dr. Johnson to the Rev. Dr. Taylor.

Dear Sir, March 18, 1752.

LET me have your company and your instruction. Do not live away from me; my distress is great.

Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and Miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

Remember me in your prayers; for vain is the help of man. I am, dear Sir, &c.

* This was of the Rambler, at Edinburgh, to which Mr. Elphinston translated the mottos.

† A very learned writer, author of several historical and philological works. He died January 1757.

‡ See Gent. Mag. Oct. 1752.

LETTER LXI.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Dearest Madam, January 1, 1755.

THOUGH I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes: yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to, dearest, dearest Madam, yours, &c.

LETTER LXII.

The same to the same.

Dearest Madam, Jan. 3, 1755.

NOBODY but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you; I concluded when he staid so long, that he staid to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise, dearest Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXIII.

Dr. Johnson to the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield.

My Lord, February 1755.

I HAVE been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement,

ment, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*;—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance*, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it†; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord, your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant.

LETTER LXIV.

*Dr. Johnson to Miss ******.*

Madam, July 19, 1755.

I know not how liberally your generosity would reward those who should do you any service, when you can so kindly acknowledge a favour which I intended only to myself. That accidentally hearing that you were in town, I made haste to enjoy an interval of pleasure which I found would be short, was the natural consequence of that self-love which is always busy in quest of happiness; of that happiness which we often miss when we think it near, and sometimes find when we imagine it lost. When I had missed you, I went away disappointed; and did not know that my vexation would be so amply repaid by so kind a letter. A letter indeed can but imperfectly supply the place of its writer, at least of such a writer as you; and a letter which makes me still more desire your presence, is but a weak consolation under the necessity of living longer without you: with this however I must be for a time content, as much content at least as discontent will suffer me; for Mr. Baretti being a single being in this part of the world, and entirely clear from all engagements, takes the advantage of his independence, and will come before me; for which if I could blame him, I should punish him; but my own heart tells me that he only does to me, what, if I could, I should do to him.

I hope Mrs. —— when she came to her favourite place, found her house dry, and her woods growing, and the breeze whistling, and the birds singing, and her own heart dancing. And for you, Madam, whose heart cannot yet dance to such music, I know not what to hope; indeed I could hope every thing that would please you, except that perhaps the

* The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton. Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter that 'no assistance has been received,' he did once receive from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds; but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find place in a letter of the kind that this was.

† In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife.

the absence of higher pleasures is necessary to keep some little place vacant in your remembrance for, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXV.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Boothby.

Dear Madam, Dec. 30, 1755.

It is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

Of the fallaciousness of hope, and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen, awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I have promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realized by execution.

Continue, my dearest, your prayers for me that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

Your billet brought me what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it!

The Doctor is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it; I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which for me is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes's argument, "I "think therefore I am." It is as good a consequence, "I write, therefore I am "alive." I might give another, "I "am alive, therefore I love Miss Booth-"by;" but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life. I am, dearest Madam, with sincere affection, your, &c.

LETTER LXVI.

The same to the same.

My sweet Angel, Dec. 30.

I have read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes I know not. You ought not to be offended: I am perhaps as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and I should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what is in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to shew it you.

It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new except new forms of expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines. I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees it best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing

thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear Angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness.

It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange-peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off.

I would not have you offer it to the Doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm; do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a-day, will be sufficient to begin, or less if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces: but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes. Has the Doctor mentioned the bark? in powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and honour you; and am very unwilling to lose you. *A Dieu je vous recommende.* I am, Madam, your, &c.

My compliments to my dear Miss.

LETTER LXVII.

Dr. Johnson to Joseph Baretti, at Milan.

London, June 10, 1761.

You reproach me very often with parsimony of writing; but you may discover by the extent of my paper, that I design to recompense rarity by length. A short letter to a distant friend is, in my opinion, an insult like that of a slight bow or cursory salutation, a proof of unwillingness to do much, even where there is a necessity of doing something. Yet it must be remembered, that he who continues the same course of life in the same place will have little to tell. One week and one year are very like another. The silent changes made by time are not always perceived; and if they are not perceived, cannot be recounted. I have risen and lain down, talked and mused, while you have roved over a considerable part of Europe; yet I have not envied my Baretti any of his pleasures, though perhaps I have envied others his company; and I am glad to have other nations made acquainted with the character of the English, by a traveller who has so nicely inspected our manners, and so successfully studied our literature. I received your kind letter from Falmouth, in which you gave me notice of your departure from Lisbon; and another from Lisbon, in which you told me that you were to leave Portugal in a few days. To either of these, how could any answer be returned? I have had a third from Turin, complaining that I have not answered the former. Your English style still continues in its purity and vigour. With vigour your genius will supply it; but its purity must be continued by close attention. To use two languages familiarly, and without contaminating one by the other, is very difficult; and to use more than two, is hardly to be hoped. The praises which some have received for their multiplicity of languages, may be sufficient to excite industry, but can hardly generate confidence.

I know not whether I can heartily rejoice at the kind reception which you have found, or at the popularity to which you are exalted. I am willing that your merit should be distinguished; but cannot wish that your affections may be gained. I would have you happy wherever you are: yet I would have you wish to return to England. If ever you visit us again, you will find the kindness of your friends undiminished. To tell you how many inquiries are made after you would be tedious, or if not tedious would be vain; because you may be told in a very few words, that all who knew you, wish you well; and all that you embraced at your departure, will caress you at your return; therefore do not let Italian acade-

academicians nor Italian ladies drive us from your thoughts. You may find among us what you will leave behind, soft smiles and easy sonnets. Yet I shall not wonder if all our invitations should be rejected; for there is a pleasure in being considerable at home, which is not easily resisted.

By conducting Mr. Southwell to Venice, you fulfilled, I know, the original contract: yet I would wish you not wholly to loose him from your notice, but to recommend him to such acquaintance as may best secure him from suffering by his own follies, and to take such general care both of his safety and his interest as may come within your power. His relations will thank you for any such gratuitous attention: at least, they will not blame you for any evil that may happen, whether they thank you or not for any good.

You know that we have a new king and a new parliament. Of the new parliament Fitzherbert is a member. We were so weary of our old king, that we are much pleased with his successor: of whom we are so much inclined to hope great things, that most of us begin already to believe them. The young man is hitherto blameless; but it would be unreasonable to expect much from the immaturity of juvenile years, and the ignorance of princely education. He has been long in the hands of the Scots, and has already favoured them more than the English will contentedly endure. But perhaps he scarcely knows whom he has distinguished, or whom he has disgusted.

The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, as I am told, of foreign Academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti. This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time, of that time which never can return.

I know my Baretti will not be satisfied with a letter in which I gave him no account of myself: yet what account shall I give him? I have not, since the day of our separation, suffered or done any thing considerable. The only change in my way of life is, that I have frequented the theatre more than in former seasons. But I have gone thither only to escape from myself. We have had many new farces, and the comedy called The Jealous Wife, which, though not written with much genius, was yet so well adapted to the stage, and so well exhibited by the actors, that it was crowded for near twenty nights. I am digressing from myself to the play-house; but a barren plan must be filled with episodes. Of myself I have nothing to say, but that I have hitherto lived without the concurrence of my own judgment; yet I continue to flatter myself, that, when you return, you will find me mended. I do not wonder that, where the monastic life is permitted, every order finds votaries, and every monastery inhabitants. Men will submit to any rule, by which they may be exempted from the tyranny of caprice and of chance. They are glad to supply by external authority their own want of constancy and resolution, and court the government of others, when long experience has convinced them of their own inability to govern themselves. If I were to visit Italy, my curiosity would be more attracted by convents than by palaces; though I am afraid that I should find expectation in both places equally disappointed, and life in both places supported with impatience, and quitted with reluctance. That it must be so soon quitted, is a powerful remedy against impatience; but what shall free us from reluctance? Those who have endeavoured to teach us to die well, have taught few to die willingly; yet I cannot but hope that a good life might end at last in a contented death.

You see to what a train of thought I am drawn by the mention of myself. Let me now turn my attention upon you. I hope you take care to keep an exact journal, and to register all occurrences and observations; for your friends here expect such a book of travels as has not been often seen. You have given us good specimens in your letters from Lisbon. I wish you had staid longer in Spain, for no country is less known to

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the rest of Europe; but the quickness of your discernment must make amends for the celerity of your motions. He that knows which way to direct his view, sees much in a little time.

Write to me very often, and I will not neglect to write you; and I may perhaps in time get something to write: at least, you will know by my letters, whatever else they may have or want, that I continue to be your most affectionate friend.

LETTER LXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Joseph Baretti.

Sir, London, July 20, 1762.

However justly you may accuse me for want of punctuality in correspondence, I am not so far lost in negligence, as to omit the opportunity of writing to you, which Mr. Beauclerk's passage through Milan affords me.

I suppose you received the Idlers, and I intend that you shall soon receive Shakspeare, that you may explain his works to the ladies of Italy, and tell them the story of the editor, among the other strange narratives with which your long residence in his unknown region has supplied you.

As you have now been long away, I suppose your curiosity may pant for some news of your old friends. Miss Williams and I live much as we did. Miss Cotterel still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter, and Charlotte is now big of the fourth child. Mr. Reynolds gets six thousand a year. Levet is lately married, not without much suspicion that he has been wretchedly cheated in his match. Mr. Chambers is gone this day, for the first time, the circuit with the judges. Mr. Richardson is dead of an apoplexy, and his second daughter has married a merchant.

My vanity, or my kindness, makes me flatter myself, that you would rather hear of me than of those whom I have mentioned; but of myself I have very little which I care to tell. Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known. My play-fellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect, that I was no longer young. My only remaining friend has changed his principles, and has become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, has lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is at least such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart.

I think in a few weeks, to try another excursion: though to what end? Let me know, my Baretti, what has been the result of your return to your own country; whether time has made any alteration for the better, and whether, when the first raptures of salutation were over, you did not find your thoughts confessed their disappointment.

Moral sentences appear ostentatious and tumid, when they have no greater occasions than the journey of a wit to his own town: yet such pleasures and such pains make up the general mass of life: and as nothing is little to him that feels it with great sensibility, a mind able to see common incidents in their real state, is disposed by very common incidents to very serious contemplations. Let us trust that a time will come, when the present moment shall be no longer irksome; when we shall not borrow all our happiness from hope, which at last is to end in disappointment.

I beg that you will shew Mr. Beauclerk all the civilities which you have in your power; for he has always been kind to me.

I have lately seen Mr. Stratico, Professer of Padua, who has told me of your quarrel with an Abbot of the Celestine Order; but had not the particulars very ready in his memory. When you write to Mr. Marsili, let him know that I remember him with kindness.

May you, my Baretti, be very happy at Milan, or some other place nearer to, Sir, your most affectionate humble servant, &c.

LETTER LXIX.

Another from Dr. Johnson to Jos. Baretti.

Sir, Dec. 21, 1762.

You are not to suppose, with all your conviction of my idleness, that I have passed all this time without writing to my Baretti. I gave a letter to Mr. Beauclerk, who, in my opinion, and in his own, was hastening to Naples for the recovery of his health; but he has stopped at Paris, and I know not when he will proceed. Langton is with him.

I will not trouble you with speculations about peace and war. The good or ill success of battles and embassies extends itself to a very small part of domestic life; we all have good and evil, which we feel more sensibly than our petty part of public miscarriage or prosperity. I am sorry for your disappointment, with which you seem more touched than I should expect a man of your resolution and experience to have been, did I not know that general truths are seldom applied to particular occasions; and that the fallacy of our self-love extends itself as wide as our interest or affections. Every man believes that mistresses are unfaithful, and patrons capricious; but he excepts his own mistress and his own patron. We have all learned that greatness is negligent and contemptuous, and that in courts, life is often languished away in ungratified expectation; but he that approaches greatness, or glitters in a court, imagines that destiny has at last exempted him from the common lot.

Do not let such evils overwhelm you as thousands have suffered and thousands have surmounted; but turn your thoughts with vigour to some other plan of life; and keep always in your mind, that, with due submission to Providence, a man of genius has been seldom ruined but by himself. Your patron's weakness or insensibility will finally do you little hurt, if he is not assisted by your own passions. Of your love I know not the propriety, nor can estimate the power; but in love, as in every other passion, of which hope is the essence, we ought always to remember the uncertainty of events. There is indeed nothing that so much seduces reason from her vigilance, as the thought of passing life with an amiable woman; and if all would happen that a lover fancies I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. Those who are to suffer the evils together, and to suffer often for the sake of one another, soon lose that tenderness of look and that benevolence of mind which arose from the participation of unmingled pleasure and successive amusement. A woman we are sure will not be always fair; we are not sure she will always be virtuous; and man cannot retain through life that respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month. I do not however pretend to have discovered that life has any thing more to be desired than a prudent and virtuous marriage; therefore know not what counsel to give you.

If you can quit your imagination of love and greatness, and leave your hopes of preferment and bridal raptures to try once more the fortune of literature and industry, the way through France is now open. We flatter ourselves that we shall cultivate with great diligence the arts of peace; and every man will be welcome among us who can teach us any thing we do not know. For your part, you will find all your old friends willing to receive you.

Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and in riches. Miss Williams, who very much loves you, goes on in the old way. Miss Cotterel is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children. Mr. Levet has married a street-walker. But the gazette of my narration must now arrive to tell you, that Bathurst went physician to the army, and died at the Havannah.

I know not whether I have not sent you word that Huggins and Richardson are both dead. When we see our enemies and friends gliding away before us, let us not forget that we are subject to the general law of mortality, and shall soon be where our doom will be fixed for ever. I pray God to bless you, and am, Sir, your most affectionate humble servant, &c.

Write soon.

LETTER LXX.

Mrs. Thrale to Mr. ——. on his marriage.

My dear Sir,

I RECEIVED the news of your marriage with infinite delight, and hope that the sincerity with which I wish your happiness may excuse the liberty I take in giving you a few rules whereby more certainly to obtain it. I see you smile at my wrong-headed kindness, and reflecting on the charms of your bride, cry out in a rapture, that you are happy enough without my rules. I know you are; but after one of the forty years, which I hope you will pass pleasingly together, are over, this letter may come in turn, and rules for felicity may not be found unnecessary, however some of them may appear impracticable.

Could that kind of love be kept alive through the married state, which makes the charm of a single one, the sovereign good would no longer be sought for; in the union of two faithful lovers it would be found: but reason shows us that this is impossible, and experience informs us that it never was so; we must preserve it as long, and supply it as happily, as we can.

When your present violence of passion subsides, however, and a more cool and tranquil affection takes its place, be not hasty to censure yourself as indifferent, or to lament yourself as unhappy; you have lost that only which it was impossible to retain, and it were graceless amid the pleasures of a prosperous summer to regret the blossoms of a transient spring. Neither unwarily condemn your bride's insipidity till you have recollected that no object however sublime, no sounds however charming, can continue to transport us with delight when they no longer strike us with novelty. The skill to renovate the powers of pleasing is said indeed to be possessed by some women in an eminent degree, but the artifices of maturity are seldom seen to adorn the innocence of youth; you have made your choice, and ought to approve it.

Satiety follows quick upon the heels of possession; and to be happy, we must always have something in view. The person of your lady is already all your own, and will not grow more pleasing in your eyes I doubt, though the rest of your sex will think her handsomer for these dozen years. Turn, therefore, all your attention to her mind, which will daily grow brighter by polishing. Study some easy science together, and acquire a similarity of tastes while you enjoy a community of pleasures. You will, by this means, have many images in common, and be freed from the necessity of separating to find amusement: nothing is so dangerous to wedded love as the possibility of either being happy out of the company of the other; endeavour therefore to cement the present intimacy on every side; let your wife never be kept ignorant of your income, your expences, your friendships, or aversions; let her know your very faults, but make them amiable by your virtues; consider all concealment as a breach of fidelity; let her never have any thing to find out in your character, and remember, that from the moment one of the partners turns spy upon the other, they have commenced a state of hostility.

Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly. Listen not to those sages who advise you always to scorn the counsel of a woman, and if you comply with her requests pronounce you to be wife ridden. Think not any privation, except of positive evil, an excellence, and do not congratulate yourself that your wife is not a learned lady, that she never touches a card, or is wholly ignorant how to make a pudding. Cards, cookery, and learning, are all good in their places, and may all be used with advantage.

With regard to expence, I can only observe, that the money laid out in the purchase of distinction is seldom or ever profitably employed. We live in an age when splendid furniture and glittering equipage are grown too common to catch the notice of the meanest spectator, and for the greater ones they only regard our wasteful folly with silent contempt, or open indignation.—This may perhaps be a displeasing reflection, but the following consideration ought to make amends. The age we live in, pays, I think, peculiar attention to the higher distinctions of wit, knowledge, and virtue, to which we may more safely, more cheaply, and more honourably, aspire. The giddy flirt of quality

quality frets at the respect she sees paid to Lady Edgecumbe, and the gay dunce sits pining for a partner, while Jones the Orientalist leads up the ball.

I said that the person of your lady would not grow more pleasing to you, but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so: that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person, is well known: nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained! There is no reproof however pointed, no punishment however severe, that a woman of spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the slights of her husband. For this, and for every reason, it behoves a married man not to let his politeness fail, though his ardour may abate, but to retain, at least, that general civility towards his own lady which he is so willing to pay to every other, and not show a wife of eighteen or twenty years old, that every man in company can treat her with more complaisance than he who so often vowed to her eternal fondness.

It is not my opinion that a young woman should be indulged in every wild wish of her gay heart or giddy head, but contradiction may be softened by domestic kindness, and quiet pleasures substituted in the place of noisy ones. Public amusements are not indeed so expensive as is somtimes imagined, but they tend to alienate the minds of married people from each other. A well-chosen society of friends and acquaintance, more eminent for virtue and good sense than for gaiety and splendour, where the conversation of the day may afford comment for the evening, seems the most rational pleasure this great town can afford; and to this a game at cards now and then gives an additional relish.

That your own superiority should always be seen, but never felt, seems an excellent general rule. A wife should outshine her husband in nothing, not even in her dress. If she happens to have a taste for the trifling distinctions that finery can confer, suffer her not for a moment to fancy, when she appears in public, that Sir Edward or the Colonel are finer gentlemen than her husband. The bane of married happiness among the city men in general has been, that finding themselves unfit for polite life they transferred their vanity to their ladies, dressed them up gaily, and sent them out a gallanting, while the good man was to regale with port-wine or rum-punch, perhaps among mean companions, after the compting-house was shut; this practice produced the ridicule thrown on them in all our comedies and novels since commerce began to prosper. But now that I am so near the subject, a word or two on jealousy may not be amiss; for though not a failing of the present age's growth, yet the seeds of it are too certainly sown in every warm bosom for us to neglect it as a fault of no consequence. If you are ever tempted to be jealous, watch your wife narrowly, but never tease her: tell her your jealousy, but conceal your suspicion; let her, in short, be satisfied that it is only your odd temper, and even troublesome attachment, that makes you follow her; but let her not dream that you ever doubted seriously of her virtue, even for a moment. If she is disposed towards jealousy of you, let me beseech you to be always explicit with her, and never mysterious: be above delighting in her pain of all things,—nor do your business, nor pay your visits, with an air of concealment, when all you are doing might as well be proclaimed perhaps in the parish vestry. But I will hope better than this of your tenderness and of your virtue, and will release you from a lecture you have so very little need of, unless your extreme youth and my uncommon regard will excuse it. And now farewell; make my kindest compliments to your wife, and be happy in proportion as happiness is wished you by, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER LXXI.

Dr. Johnson a Mr. Mr. Boswell, à la Cour de l'Empereur, Utrecht.

Dear Sir, London, Dec. 8, 1763.

You are not to think yourself forgotten, or criminally neglected, that you have had yet no letter from me. I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, and to talk of

them; but it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, however, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

To tell you that I am or am not well, that I have or have not been in the country, that I drank your health in the room in which we sat last together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topics with which those letters are commonly filled which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion, or fortify any generous resolution, you need not doubt but I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy. Whether I shall easily arrive at an exact punctuality of correspondence, I cannot tell. I shall, at present, expect that you will receive this in return for two which I have had from you. The first, indeed, gave me an account so hopeless of the state of your mind, that it hardly admitted or deserved an answer; by the second I was much better pleased; and the pleasure will still be increased by such a narrative of the progress of your studies, as may evince the continuance of an equal and rational application of your mind to some useful inquiry.

You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question whether you shall endeavour to know the will of God.

I shall, therefore, consider only such studies as we are at liberty to pursue or to neglect: and of these I know not how you will make a better choice, than by studying the civil law, as your father advises, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourself; at least resolve, while you remain in any settled residence, to spend a certain number of hours every day amongst your books. The dissipation of thought, of which you complain, is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind suspended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loses strength. If you can but kindle in your mind any strong desire, if you can but keep predominant any wish for some particular excellence or attainment, the gusts of imagination will break away, without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction, which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that Nature has given him something peculiar to himself. This vanity makes one mind nurse aversions, and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power; and as affection, in time improves to habit, they at last tyrannise over him who at first encouraged them only for show. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman, who, when first he set his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himself to whirl in the vortex of pleasure, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the most agreeable concomitants of youth, and the strongest indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehension. Vacant to every object, and sensible of every impulse, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct something from the reputation of genius; and hoped that he should appear to attain, amidst all the ease of carelessness and all the tumult of diversion, that knowledge and those accomplishments which mortals of the common fabric obtain only by mute abstraction and solitary drudgery. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue, he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, still willing to retain his claim to some extraordinary prerogatives, resolved the common consequences of irregularity into an unalterable decree of destiny, and concluded that Nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

Let all such fancies, illusive and destructive, be banished henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Resolve, and keep your resolution; choose, and pursue your

your choice. If you spend this day in study, you will find yourself still more able to study to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you shall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very easily overcome. Resolution will some time relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted; but let no accidental surprize or deviation, whether short or long, dispose you to despondency. Consider these failings as incident to all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the seducements that prevailed over you before.

This, my dear Boswell, is advice which, perhaps, has been often given you, and given you without effect. But this advice, if you will not take from others, you must take from your own reflections, if you purpose to do the duties of the station to which the bounty of Providence has called you.

Let me have a long letter from you as soon as you can. I hope you continue your journal, and enrich it with many observations upon the country in which you reside. It will be a favour if you can get me any books in the Frisick language, and can inquire how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate servant.

LETTER LXXII.

Dr. Johnson a Mr. Mr. Boswell, chez Mr. Waters, Banquier, à Paris.

Johnson's-court, Fleet-Street,

Dear Sir, Jan. 14, 1766.

APOLOGIES are seldom of any use. We will delay till your arrival the reasons, good or bad, which have made me such a sparing and ungrateful correspondent. Be assured, for the present, that nothing has lessened either the esteem or love with which I dismissed you at Harwich. Both have been increased by all that I have been told of you by yourself or others; and when you return, you will return to an unaltered, and, I hope, unalterable friend.

All that you have to fear from me is the vexation of disappointing me. No man loves to frustrate expectations which have been formed in his favour; and the pleasure which I promise myself from your journals and remarks is so great, that perhaps no degree of attention or discernment will be sufficient to afford it.

Come home, however, and take your chance. I long to see you, and to hear you; and hope that we shall not be so long separated again. Come home, and expect such a welcome as is due to him, whom a wife and noble curiosity has led, where perhaps no native of this country ever was before.

I have no news to tell you that can deserve your notice; nor would I willingly lessen the pleasure that any novelty may give you at your return. I am afraid we shall find it difficult to keep among us a mind which has been so long feasted with variety. But let us try what esteem and kindness can effect.

As your father's liberality has indulged you with so long a ramble, I doubt not but you will think his sickness, or even his desire to see you, a sufficient reason for hastening your return. The longer we live, and the more we think, the higher value we learn to put on the friendship and tenderness of parents and of friends. Parents we can have but once; and he promises himself too much who enters life with the expectation of finding many friends. Upon some motive, I hope, that you will be here soon; and am willing to think that it will be an inducement to your return, that it is sincerely desired by, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant.

LETTER LXXIII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

[*Not dated, but written about the 15th of March.*]

Dear Sir,

I AM ashamed to think that since I received your letter I have passed so many days without answering it.

I think there is no great difficulty in resolving your doubts. The reasons for which you are inclined to visit London, are, I think, not of sufficient strength to answer the objections. That you should delight to come once a year to the fountain of intelligence and pleasure is very natural; but both information and plea-

sure must be regulated by propriety. Pleasure, which cannot be obtained but by unreasonable or unsuitable expence, must always end in pain: and pleasure, which must be enjoyed at the expence of another's pain, can never be such as a worthy mind can fully delight in.

What improvement you might gain by coming to London, you may easily supply or easily compensate, by enjoining yourself some particular study at home, or opening some new avenue to information. Edinburgh is not yet exhausted; and I am sure you will find no pleasure here which can deserve either that you should anticipate any part of your future fortune, or that you should condemn yourself and your lady to penurious frugality for the rest of the year.

I need not tell you what regard you owe to Mrs. Boswell's entreaties; or how much you ought to study the happiness of her who studies yours with so much diligence, and of whose kindness you enjoy such good effects. Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions. She permitted you to ramble last year, you must permit her now to keep you at home.

Your last reason is so serious, that I am unwilling to oppose it. Yet you must remember, that your image of worshipping once a year in a certain place, in imitation of the Jews, is but a comparison, and *simile non est idem*; if the annual resort to Jerusalem was a duty to the Jews, it was a duty because it was commanded; and you have no such command, therefore no such duty. It may be dangerous to receive too readily, and indulge too fondly, opinions, from which perhaps, no pious mind is wholly disengaged, of local sanctity and local devotion. You know what strange effects they have produced over a great part of the Christian world. I am now writing, and you, when you read this, are reading under the Eye of Omnipresence.

To what degree fancy is to be admitted into religious offices, it would require much deliberation to determine. I am far from intending totally to exclude it. Fancy is a faculty bestowed by our Creator, and it is reasonable that all his gifts should be used to his glory, that all our faculties should co-operate in his worship; but they are to co-operate according to the will of him that gave them, according to the order which his wisdom has established. As ceremonies prudential or convenient are less obligatory than positive ordinances, as bodly worship is only the token to others or ourselves of mental adoration, so Fancy is always to act in subordination to Reason. We may take Fancy for a companion, but must follow Reason as our guide. We may allow Fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places, but Reason must always be heard, when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church we habitually recall to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple; because we know, and ought to remember, that the Universal Lord is every where present; and that, therefore, to come to Jona, or to Jerusalem, though it may be useful, cannot be necessary.

Thus I have answered your letter, and have not answered it negligently. I love you too well to be careless when you are serious.

I think I shall be very diligent next week about our travels, which I have too long neglected. I am, dear Sir, your most, &c.

Compliments to Madam and Miss.

LETTER LXXIV.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. James Macpherson.

Mr. James Macpherson,

I RECEIVED your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reason to the public, which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

LETTER LXXV.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

Dear Sir, London, Aug. 27, 1775.

I AM now returned from the annual ramble into the middle counties. Having seen nothing that I had not seen before, I have nothing to relate. Time has left that part of the island few antiquities; and commerce has left the people no singularities. I was glad to go abroad, and, perhaps, glad to come home; which is, in other words, I was, I am afraid, weary of being at home, and weary of being abroad. Is not this the state of life? But, if we confess this weariness, let us not lament it; for all the wise and all the good say, that we may cure it.

For the black fumes which rise in your mind, I can prescribe nothing but that you disperse them by honest business or innocent pleasure, and by reading sometimes easy and sometimes serious. Change of place is useful; and I hope that your residence at Auchinleck will have many good effects.* * * * * * *

That I should have given pain to Rasay, I am sincerely sorry; and am therefore very much pleased that he is no longer uneasy. He still thinks that I have represented him as personally giving up the chieftainship. I meant only that it was no longer contested between the two houses, and supposed it settled, perhaps, by the cession of some remote generation in the house of Dunvegan. I am sorry the advertisement was not continued for three or four times in the papers.

That Lord Monboddo and Mr. Macqueen shouldcontrovert a position contrary to the imaginary interest of literary or national prejudice, might be easily imagined; but of a standing fact there ought to be no controversy: if there are men with tails, catch an *homo caudatus*; if there was writing of old in the Highlands or Hebrides, in the Erse language, produce the manuscripts. Where men write they will write to one another, and some of their letters, in families studious of their ancestry, will be kept. In Wales there are many manuscripts.

I have now three parcels of Lord Hailes's History, which I purpose to return all the next week: that his respect for my little observations should keep his work in suspense, makes one of the evils of my journey. It is in our language, I think, a new mode of history, which tells all that is wanted, and, I suppose, all that is known, without laboured splendour of language, or affected subtilty of conjecture. The exactness of his dates raises my wonder. He seems to have the closeness of Henault without his constraint.

Mrs. Thrale was so entertained with your 'Journal*,' that she almost read herself blind. She has a great regard for you.

Of Mrs. Boswell, though she knows in her heart that she does not love me, I am always glad to hear any good, and hope that she and the little dear ladies will have neither sickness nor any other affliction. But she knows that she does not care what becomes of me, and for that she may be sure that I think her very much to blame.

Never, my dear sir, do you take it into year head to think that I do not love you; you may settle yourself in full confidence both of my love and my esteem; I love you as a kind man, I value you as a worthy man, and hope in time to reverence you as a man of exemplary piety. I hold you, as Hamlet has it, 'in my heart 'of heart,' and, therefore, it is little to say, that I am, Sir, your affectionate humble servant.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Boswell.

Madam, July 22, 1777.

THOUGH I am well enough pleased with the taste of sweetmeats, very little of the pleasure which I received at the arrival of your jar of marmalade arose from eating it. I received it as a token of friendship, as a proof of reconciliation, things much sweeter than sweetmeats, and upon this consideration I return you, dear Madam, my sincerest thanks. By having your kindness I think I have a double security for the continuance of Mr. Boswell's, which it is not to be expected that any man can long keep, when the influence of a lady so highly and so

* Mr. Boswell's "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," which that lady read in the original manuscript.

justly valued operates against him. Mr. Boswell will tell you, that I was always faithful to your interest, and always endeavoured to exalt you in his estimation. You must now do the same for me. We must all help one another, and you must now consider me, as, dear Madam, your most obliged, and most humble servant.

LETTER LXXVII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

Dear Sir, Ashbourne, Sept. 1, 1777.

On Saturday I wrote a very short letter immediately upon my arrival hither, to show you that I am not less desirous of the interview than yourself. Life admits not of delays; when pleasure can be had it is fit to catch it: every hour takes away part of the things that please us, and perhaps part of our disposition to be pleased. When I came to Lichfield, I found my old friend Harry Jackson dead. It was a loss, and a loss not to be repaired, as he was one of the companions of my childhood. I hope we may long continue to gain friends, but the friends which merit or usefulness can procure us, are not able to supply the place of old acquaintance, with whom the days of youth may be retraced, and those images revived which gave the earliest delight. If you and I live to be much older, we shall take great delight in talking over the Hebridean Journey.

In the mean time it may not be amiss to contrive some other little adventure, but what it can be I know not; leave it, as Sidney says,

To virtue, fortune, wine, and woman's breast;

for I believe Mrs. Boswell must have some part in the consultation.

One thing you will like. The Doctor so far as I can judge, is likely to leave us enough to ourselves. He was out to day before I came down, and, I fancy, will stay out to dinner, I have brought the papers about poor Dodd, to show you, but you will soon have dispatched them.

Before I came away I sent poor Mrs. Williams into the country, very ill of a pituitous defluxion, which wastes her gradually away, and which her physician declares himself unable to stop. I supplied her as far as could be desired, with all conveniencies to make her excursion and abode pleasant and useful, but I am afraid she can only linger a short time in a morbid state of weakness and pain.

The Thrales, little and great, are all well, and purpose to go to Brighthelmston at Michaelmas. They will invite me to go with them, and perhaps I may go, but I hardly think I shall like to stay the whole time; but of futurity we know but little.

Mrs. Porter is well; but Mrs. Aston, one of the ladies at Stowhill, has been struck with a palsy, from which she is not likely ever to recover. How soon may such a stroke fall upon us!

Write to me, and let us know when we may expect you. I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Elphinston.

Sir, July 27, 1778.

Having myself suffered what you are now suffering, I well know the weight of your distress, how much need you have of comfort, and how little comfort can be given. A loss, such as yours, lacerates the mind, and breaks the whole system of purposes and hopes. It leaves a dismal vacuity in life, which affords nothing on which the affections can fix, or to which endeavour may be directed. All this I have known, and it is now, in the vicissitude of things, your turn to know it.

But in the condition of mortal beings, one must lose another. What would be the wretchedness of life, if there was not something always in view, some Being, immutable and unfailing, to whose mercy man may have recourse? Τον πρωτον κινουντα ακινητον.

Here we must rest. The greatest Being is the most benevolent. We must not grieve for the dead as men without hope, because we know they are in his hands. We have, indeed, not leisure to grieve long, because we are hastening to follow them. Your race and mine have been interrupted by many obstacles, but we must humbly hope for an happy end. I am, Sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER LXXIX.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

My dear Sir, Streatham, Sept. 9, 1779.

ARE you playing the same trick again, and trying who can keep silence longest? Remember that all tricks are either knavish or childish; and that it is as foolish to make experiments upon the constancy of a friend, as upon the chastity of a wife.

What can be the cause of this second fit of silence, I cannot conjecture; but after one trick, I will not be cheated by another, nor will harass my thoughts with conjectures about the motives of a man who, probably, acts only by caprice. I therefore suppose you are well, and that Mrs. Boswell is well too, and that the fine summer has restored Lord Auchinleck. I am much better than you left me; I think I am better than when I was in Scotland.

I forgot whether I informed you that poor Thrale has been in great danger. Mrs. Thrale likewise has miscarried, and been much indisposed. Every body else is well; Langton is in camp. I intend to put Lord Haile's description of Dryden* into another edition, and as I know his accuracy, wish he would consider the dates, which I could not always settle to my own mind.

Mr. Thrale goes to Brighthelmston, about Michaelmas, to be jolly and ride a hunting. I shall go to town, or perhaps to Oxford. Exercise and gaiety, or rather carelessness, will, I hope, dissipate all remains of his malady; and I likewise hope, by the change of place, to find some opportunities of growing yet better myself. I am, dear Sir, your humble servant.

LETTER LXXX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, April 8, 1780.

WELL, I had resolved to send you the Chesterfield letter; but I will write once again without it. Never impose tasks upon mortals. To require two things is the way to have them both undone.

For the difficulties which you mention in your affairs I am sorry; but difficulty is now very general: it is not therefore less grievous, for there is less hope of help. I pretend not to give you advice, not knowing the state of your affairs, and general counsels about prudence and frugality would do you little good. You are, however, in the right not to increase your own perplexity by a journey hither; and I hope that by staying at home you will please your father.

Poor dear Beauclerk—*nec, ut soles, dabis joca.* His wit and his folly, his acuteness and maliciousness, his merriment and reasoning, are now over. Such another will not often be found among mankind. He directed himself to be buried by the side of his mother, an instance of tenderness which I hardly expected. He has left his children to the care of Lady Di. and if she dies, of Mr. Langton, and of Mr. Leicester his relation, and a man of good character. His library has been offered to sale to the Russian ambassador.

Dr. Percy, notwithstanding all the noise of the newspapers, has had no literary loss†. Clothes and moveables were burnt to the value of about one hundred pounds; but his papers, and I think his books, were all preserved.

Poor Mr. Thrale has been in extreme danger from an apoplectical disorder, and recovered, beyond the expectation of his physicians; he is now at Bath, that his mind may be quiet, and Mrs. Thrale and Miss are with him.

Having told you what has happened to your friends, let me say something to you of yourself. You are always complaining of melancholy, and I conclude from those complaints that you are fond of it. No man talks of that which he is desirous to conceal, and every man desires to conceal that of which he is ashamed. Do not pretend to deny it; *manifestum habemus furem*; make it an invariable and obligatory law to yourself never to mention your own mental diseases; if you are never to speak of them, you will think on them but little, and if you think little of them, they will molest you rarely. When you talk of them, it is plain that you want either praise or pity: for praise there is no room, and pity will do you no good; therefore, from

* Which Mr. Boswell communicated to him from his Lordship.

† By a fire in Northumberland-house, where he had an apartment.

this

this hour speak no mere, think no more about them.

Your transaction with Mrs. Stuart gave me great satisfaction; I am much obliged to you for your attention. Do not lose sight of her, your countenance may be of great credit, and of consequence of great advantage to her. The memory of her brother is yet fresh in my mind; he was an ingenious and worthy man.

Please to make my compliments to your lady, and to the young ladies. I should like to see them, pretty loves. I am, dear Sir, yours affectionately.

LETTER LXXXI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, June 10, 1780.

You have ere now heard and read enough to convince you, that we have had something to suffer and something to fear, and therefore I think it necessary to quiet the solicitude which you undoubtedly feel, by telling you that our calamities and terrors are now at an end. The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; the streets are safe and quiet; Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day with a party of soldiers in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper. Every body walks, and eats, and sleeps in security. But the history of the last week would fill you with amazement; it is without any modern example.

Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive Papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the jails. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken, and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the king and the law. I thought that it would be agreeable to you and my master to have my testimony to the public security, and that you would sleep more quietly when I told you that you are safe. I am, dearest Lady, your &c.

LETTER LXXXII.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, June 12, 1780.

All is well, and all is likely to continue well. The streets are all quiet, and the houses are all safe. This is a true answer to the first inquiry which obtrudes itself upon your tongue at the reception of a letter from London. The public has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night, but in no great number; and, like other thieves, with no great resolution. Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panic, when no resistance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack, who was always zealous for order and decency, declares, that if he be trusted with power he will not leave a rioter alive. There is however now no longer any need of heroism or bloodshed; no blue ribbon is any longer worn.

———— called on Friday at Mrs. Gardiner's, to see how she escaped or what she suffered; and told her that she had herself too much affliction within doors, to take much notice of the disturbances without.

It was surely very happy that you and Mr. Thrale were away in the tumult; you could have done nothing better than has been done, and must have felt much terror which your absence has spared you.

We have accounts here of great violences committed by the Protestants at Bath; and of the demolition of the mass-house. We have seen so much here that we are very credulous.

Pray tell Miss Burney that Mr. Hutton called on me yesterday, and spoke of her with praise; not profuse but very sincere, just as I do. And tell Queeney, that if she does not write oftener, I will try to forget her. There are other pretty girls that perhaps I could get, if I were not constant.

My Lives go on but slowly. I hope to

to add some to them this week. I wish they were well done.

Thus far had I written when I received your letter of battle and conflagration. You certainly do right in retiring; for who can guess the caprice of the rabble? My master and Queeney are dear people for not being frighted, and you and Burney are dear people for being frighted. I wrote to you a letter of intelligence and consolation; which, if you staid for it, you had on Saturday; and I wrote another on Saturday, which perhaps may follow you from Bath, with some achievement of John Wilkes.

Do not be disturbed; all danger here is apparently over; but a little agitation still continues. We frighten one another with seventy thousand Scots to come hither with the Dukes of Gordon and Argyle, and eat us, and hang us, or drown us; but we are all at quiet.

I am glad, though I hardly know why, that you are gone to Brighthelmston rather than to Bristol. You are somewhat nearer home, and I may perhaps come to see you. Brighthelmston will soon begin to be peopled, and Mr. Thrale loves the place; and you will see Mr. Scrase; and though I am sorry that you should be so outrageously unroosted, I think that Bath has had you long enough.

Of the commotions at Bath there has been talk here all day. An express must have been sent; for the report arrived many hours before the post, at least before the distribution of the letters. This report I mentioned in the first part of my letter, while I was yet uncertain of the fact.

When it is known that the rioters are quelled in London, their spirit will sink in every other place, and little more mischief will be done. I am, dear Madam, your, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, June 14, 1780.

EVERY thing here is safe and quiet. This the first thing to be told; and this I told in my last letter directed to Brighthelmston. There has indeed been an universal panic, from which the King was the first that recovered. Without the concurrence of his ministers, or the assistance of the civil magistrate, he put the soldiers in motion, and saved the town from calamities, such as a rabble's government must naturally produce.

Now you are at ease about the public, I may tell you that I am not well; I have had a cold and cough for some time, but it is grown so bad, that yesterday I fasted and was blooded, and to day took physic and dined: but neither fasting nor bleeding, nor dinner, nor physic, have yet made me well.

No sooner was the danger over, than the people of the Borough found out how foolish it was to be afraid, and formed themselves into four bodies for the defence of the place; through which they now march morning and evening in a martial manner.

I am glad to find that Mr. Thrale continues to grow better; if he is well, I hope we shall be all well: but I am very weary of my cough, though I have had much worse. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXIV.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, June 10, 1780.

IF Mr. Thrale eats but half his usual quantity, he can hardly eat too much. It were better however to have some rule and some security. Last week I saw flesh but twice, and I think fish once, the rest was pease.

You are afraid, you say, lest I extenuate myself too fast, and are an enemy to violence: but did you never hear, nor read, dear Madam, that every man has his genius, and that the great rule by which all excellence is attained, and all success procured, is, to follow genius? and have you not observed in all our conversations that my genius is always in extremes; that I am very noisy, or very silent; very gloomy, or very merry; very sour or very kind? And would ye have me cross my genius, when it leads me sometimes to voracity and sometimes to abstinence? You know that the oracle said follow your genius. When we get together again, (but when alas will that be?) you can manage me, and spare me the solicitude of managing myself.

Poor

Poor Miss O—— called on me on Saturday with that fond and tender application which is natural to misery, when it looks to every body for that help which nobody can give. I was melted; and soothed and counselled her as well as I could, and am to visit her to-morrow.

She gave a very honourable account of my dear Queeney; and says of my master, that she thinks his manner and temper more altered than his looks, but of this alteration she could give no particular account; and all that she could say ended in this, that he is now sleepy in the morning. I do not wonder at the scantiness of her narration, she is too busy within to turn her eyes abroad.

I am glad that Pepys is come, but hope that resolute temperence will make him unnecessary. I doubt he can do no good to poor Mr. Scrase.

I stay at home to work, and yet do not work diligently; nor can tell when I shall have done, nor perhaps does any body but myself wish me to have done: for what can they hope I shall do better? yet I wish the work was over, and I was at liberty. And what would I do if I was at liberty; Would I go to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, and see the old places, and sigh to find that my old friends are gone? Would I recall plans of life which I never brought into practice, and hopes of excellence which I once presumed, and never have attained? Would I compare what I now am with what I once expected to have been? Is it reasonable to wish for suggestions of shame and opportunities of sorrow?

If you please, Madam, we will have an end of this, and contrive some other wishes. I wish I had you in an evening, and I wish I had you in a morning; and I wish I could have a little talk, and see a little frolic. For all this I must stay, but life will not stay.

I will end my letter and go to Blackmore's life, when I have told you that I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson.

Aug. 20.

I WILL try, my dear Sir, to make you some amends, by writing at least one very long letter; but indeed I can think only of one thing, whatever I may say.

Do you recollect our laughing fifteen years ago at a gawky girl of seventeen? who, when her toast was called for at a city table crowded with coarse men—they were drinking sentiments--Is not says she, this a pretty health—*What we think on most and talk on least.* I am come pretty much to her case; for it is not right to speak of that which never fails to keep pressing upon my spirits, and preying upon my mind. Without frequent bleedings, there is however danger on one side, and by bleeding frequently, we induce as certain a danger on the other.—We had a visit yesterday from Mr. R——; whom perhaps you remember, perhaps not: but our morning conversation with him will not be easily forgotten by me. I thought it would drive me wild upon the spot. In such a case, can there be any fears of my stealing away to Italy without you, when I should not think you, nor twenty more such friends if I could find them, sufficient to guard us from the hazard of wild exploits. Whoever is sick is surely safest at home; and have we not mortifications enough already, without going where one might be amused, in order to be miserable? Oh, no! let us be miserable in the old places, and not pollute scenes of pleasure with objects of sorrow.

Well! as you say, Queeney is beginning life, and so far very happily, as it is begun under you tuition: she appears to me proud of your partiality; and, I dare say, will try long to deserve it. You are getting quite well as it appears; and when we meet, we shall see *victor annorum*. The lives will be a standing proof of your powers after the grand climacteric; and you make gay impromptus upon the boys, instead of sitting down like common mortals at seventy, and letting the boys make gay impromptus upon you.

Blackmore's life is admirable; who says I do not like it? I like all the Whig lives prodigiously: Akenside's best of the little ones, for the sake of a pretty disquisition upon ridicule that pleased me particularly, and that elegant stricture on the Pleasures of Imagination; which will probably be much read and admired by every one. It is my sincere opinion that Milton and Blackmore, and Thomson,

Thomson, would have been all contented with what you have said of them, though the admirers of Lycidas will be angry no doubt.

The censures of Milton's republican spirit would scarce have shocked him: he knew himself to be acrimonious and surly; like Young's Busiris, who called himself the Proud, and gloried in it.

Your account of his domestic behaviour, however, puts me in mind of the fierce fellow in a droll book called Pompey the Little, who comes home from the public house where he had been vapouring and storming away about liberty of speech—and treats his poor wife with the most brutal tyranny, only because she just says, Indeed, mydear, I do not understand politics. Your harsh expressions of wrath against the author are, after all, so buried under the majestic praises bestowed upon Paradise Lost, that even I am forced to forgive them. Poor dear Dr. Collier used always to bring that poem forward as a testimony to the excellence of Toryism; for, says he, you may observe that it is wholly formed upon our principles of obedience and subordination; and I half wish, for the sake of my first friend, whose memory I shall for ever revere, that his remark had been preserved in this work of your's, which will doubtless be disseminated far and wide; and, for aught I know, take possession of the lands on which it lights, as Don Sebastian said of the dust that his body when dead would be dried into.

And now if you call this flattery, I can leave off in a minute without bidding; for since you lions have no skill in dandling the kid, we kids can expect but rough returns for caresses bestowed upon our haughty monarch—So be diligent, dear Sir, and have done with these men that have been buried these hundred years, and do not sit making verses that never will be written, but sit down steadily and finish their lives who did do something; and then think a little about mine, which has not been a happy one, for all you tease me so concerning the pleasures I enjoy, and the flattery I receive, all which has nothing to do with comfort for the present distress, and sometimes I am angry when I read such stuff. That your two sultanas are sick is very uncomfortable for you; may be Dr. Turton may do them good: I never saw Dr. Turton; but my heart, like Clarissa's, naturally leans toward a physician. *Le medecin et le curé*, as the French themselves, who have gayer hearts than mine, confess, are the last earthly objects on which the human hopes and human eyes are to be fixed: and it is somewhat unfair not to let them take up a little of our affections beforehand.

If we do go to Michelgrove, Hester will write all one; she is very attentive to her father, very dutiful, and very wise. I hope my anxiety is concealed from her pretty well; it would be exceedingly wrong to depress her spirits, and very dangerous to her health. I am most sincerely, dear Sir, your faithful servant.

The conversation you enclosed I could have written myself; as Juliet says, Yea, but all this did I know before.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

Dear Sir, London, Aug. 21, 1780.

I FIND you have taken one of your fits of taciturnity, and have resolved not to write till you are written to; it is but a peevish humour, but you shall have your way.

I have sate at home in Bolt-court, all the summer, thinking to write the Lives, and a great part of the time only thinking. Several of them, however, are done, and I still think to do the rest.

Mr. Thrale and his family have, since his illness, passed their time first at Bath, and then at Brighthelmston: but I have been at neither place. I would have gone to Lichfield, if I could have had time, and I might have had time, if I had been active; but I have missed much, and done little.

In the late disturbances Mr. Thrale's house and stock were in great danger; the mob was pacified at their first invasion, with about fifty pounds in drink and meat; and at their second, were driven away by the soldiers. Mr. Strahan got a garrison into his house, and maintained them a fortnight; he was so frighted that he removed part of his goods. Mrs. Williams took shelter in the Country.

I know not whether I shall get a ramble this autumn: it is now about the time when we were travelling. I have, however,

ever, better health than I had then, and hope you and I may yet show ourselves on some part of Europe, Asia, or Africa. In the mean time let us play no trick, but keep each other's kindness by all means in our power.

The bearer of this is Dr. Dunbar, of Aberdeen, who has written and published a very ingenious book, and who I think has a kindness for me, and will, when he knows you, have a kindness for you.

I suppose your little ladies are grown tall; and your son is become a learned young man. I love them all, and I love your naughty lady, whom I never shall persuade to love me. When the Lives are done, I shall send them to complete her collection, but must send them in paper, as for want of a pattern, I cannot bind them to fit the rest. I am, Sir, yours most affectionately.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Dr. Johnson to ——— ———.

Dear Sir, Bolt-court, Aug. 30, 1780.

Not many days ago Dr. L. showed me a letter, in which you make kind mention of me: I hope therefore you will not be displeased that I endeavour to preserve your good-will by some observations which your letter suggested to me.

You are afraid of falling into some improprieties in the daily service, by reading to an audience that requires no exactness. Your fear, I hope, secures you from danger. They who contract absurd habits, are such as have no fear. It is impossible to do the same thing very often without some peculiarity of manner; but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at least preserve it from being bad; to make it very good, there must, I think, be something of natural or casual felicity which cannot be taught.

Your present method of making your sermons seems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be supposed to have sermons more their own than your's will be. Take care to register somewhere or other the authors from whom your several discourses are borrowed; and do not imagine that you shall always remember even what perhaps you now think it impossible to forget.

My advice however is, that you attempt from time to time an original sermon, and in the labour of composition do not burden your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first, and then embellish. The production of something, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy than the expansion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they rise in the first words that occur, and when you have matter you will easily give it form; nor perhaps will this method be always necessary, for by habit your thoughts and diction will flow together.

The composition of sermons is not very difficult; the divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of invention, and keep every part to its proper place.

What I like least in your letter is your account of the manners of the parish; from which I gather that it has been long neglected by the parson. The Dean of Carlisle*, who was then a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me that it might be discerned whether or no there was a clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manners of the people. Such a congregation as your's stand in much need of reformation; and I would not have you think it impossible to reform them. A very savage parish was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty school. My learned friend, Dr. Wheeler, of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighbouring parish for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience that it compelled him to make a sermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, she only answered that she was no scholar. He was advised to set some good woman or man of the parish, a little wiser than herself, to talk to her in language level to her mind. Such honest, I may call them holy artifices, must be practised by every clergyman, for all means must be tried by which souls may be saved. Talk to your people, how-

* Now Bishop of Dromore.

ever, as much as you can, and you will find that the more frequently you converse with them upon religious subjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more submissively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable. I think I have now only to say that in the momentous work that you have undertaken I pray God to bless you. I am, Sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to the Hon. Warren Hastings, Esq. Governor General of Bengal.

Sir, Jan. 9, 1781.

AMIDST the importance and multiplicity of affairs in which your great office engages you, I take the liberty of recalling your attention for a moment to literature, and will not prolong the interruption by an apology, which your character makes needless.

Mr. Hoole, a gentleman long known and long esteemed in the India House, after having translated Tasso, has undertaken Ariosto. How well he is qualified for his undertaking, he has already shown. He is desirous, Sir, of your favour in promoting his proposals, and flatters me by supposing that my testimony may advance his interest.

It is a new thing for a clerk of the India House to translate poets.—It is new for a Governor of Bengal to patronize learning. That he may find his ingenuity rewarded, and that learning may flourish under your protection, is the wish of, Sir, your most humble servant.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, on the Death of Mr. Thrale.

London,

Dearest Madam, April 5, 1781.

OF your injunctions to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this. But let us remember, that we are in the hands of Him who knows when to give and when to take away; who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother; and at last, the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven.

I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business, has little room for useless regret.

We read the will to day; but I will not fill my first letter with any other account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expences, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses and all the goods?

Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end. I am, dearest Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XC.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, April 7, 1781.

I HOPE you begin to find your mind grow clearer. My part of the loss hangs upon me. I have lost a friend of boundless kindness at an age when it is very unlikely that I should find another.

If you think change of place likely to relieve you, there is no reason why you should not go to Bath; the distances are unequal.

unequal, but with regard to practice and business they are the same. It is a day's journey from either place; and the post is more expeditious and certain to Bath. Consult only your own inclination, for there is really no other principle of choice. God direct and bless you.

Mr. C—— has offered Mr. P—— money, but it was not wanted. I hope we shall do all we can to make you less unhappy, and you must do all you can for yourself. What we, or what you can do, will for a time be but little; yet certainly that calamity which may be considered as doomed to fall inevitably on half mankind, is not finally without alleviation.

It is something for me, that as I have not the decrepitude I have not the callousness of old age. I hope in time to be less afflicted. I am, &c.

LETTER XCI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

London,
Dearest Madam, April 9, 1781.

THAT you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship be it worth more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects; you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise; I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors. Be pleased to let me know whether you would have me come to Streatham to receive you, or stay here till the next day. I am, &c.

LETTER XCII.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, April 11, 1781.

I AM glad to hear from my dear Miss that you have recovered tranquillity enough to think on bathing; but there is no disposition in the world to leave you long to yourself. Mr. P—— pretends that your absence produces a thousand difficulties which I believe it does not produce. He frights Mr. C***. Mr. C—— is of my mind, that there is no need of hurry. I would not have this importunity give you any alarm or disturbance; but, to pacify it, come as soon as you can prevail upon your mind to mingle with business. I think business the best remedy for grief as soon as it can be admitted.

We met to day, and were told of mountainous difficulties, till I was provoked to tell them, that if there were really so much to do and suffer there would be no executors in the world. Do not suffer yourself to be terrified.

I comfort you, and hope God will bless and support you; but I feel myself like a man beginning a new course of life. I had interwoven myself with my dear friend; but our great care ought to be, that we may be fit and ready, when in a short time we shall be called to follow him.

There is, however no use in communicating to you my heaviness of heart. I thank dear Miss for her letter. I am, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

The same to the same.

London,
Dearest Madam, April 12, 1781.

YOU will not suppose that much has happened since last night, nor indeed is this a time for talking much of loss and gain. The business of Christians is now for a few days in their own bosoms. God grant us to do it properly. I hope you gain ground on your affliction. I hope to overcome mine. You and Miss must comfort one another. May you long live happily

happily together. I have nobody whom I expect to share my uneasiness, nor, if I could communicate it, would it be less. I give it little vent, and amuse it as I can. Let us pray for one another. And, when we meet, we may try what fidelity and tenderness will do for us.

There is no wisdom in useless and hopeless sorrow; but there is something in it so like virtue, that he who is wholly without it cannot be loved, nor will by me at least be thought worthy of esteem. My next letter will be to Queeny. I am, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, April 14, 1731.

My intention was to have written this day to my dear Queeney; but I have just heard from you, and therefore this letter shall be yours. I am glad that you find the behaviour of your acquaintance such as you can commend. The world is not so unjust or unkind as it is peevishly represented. Those who deserve well seldom fail to receive from others such services as they can perform; but few have much in their power, or are so stationed as to have great leisure from their own affairs, and kindness must be commonly the exuberance of content. The wretched have no compassion, they can do good only from strong principles of duty.

I purpose to receive you at Streatham, but wonder that you come so soon.

I sent immediately to Mr. Perkins to send you twenty pounds, and intended to secure you from disappointment by inclosing a note in this; but yours written on Wednesday 11th, came not till Saturday the 14th, and mine written to-night, will not come before you leave Brighthelmston, unless you have put Monday next for Monday sevennight, which I suspect, as you mention no alteration of your mind. I am, &c.

LETTER XCV.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson.

Dear Sir, Nov. 2.

There was no need to be enraged, because I thought you might easily forget a transaction not at all pleasing to remember; nor no need that I should be enraged if you had indeed forgotten it—but you was always suspicious in matters of memory. Cummins does not forget it, however, as I can tell you more at large. My health is growing very bad to be sure. I will starve still more rigidly for a while, and watch myself carefully: but more than six months will I not bestow upon that subject; you shall not have in me a valetudinary correspondent, who is always writing such letters, that to read the labels tied on bottles by an apothecary's boy would be more eligible and amusing; nor will I live like Flavia in Law's Serious Call, who spends half her time and money on herself, with sleeping draughts and waking draughts, and cordials and broths. My desire is always to determine against my own gratification, so far as shall be possible for my body to co-operate with my mind, and you will not suspect me of wearing blisters, and living wholly upon vegetables for sport. If that will do, the disorder may be removed; but if health is gone, and gone for ever, we will act as Zachary Pearce the famous bishop of Rochester did, when he lost the wife he loved so—call for one glass to the health of her who is departed, never more to return—and so go quietly back to the usual duties of life, and forbear to mention her again from that time till the last day of it.——Susan is exceedingly honoured, *I* think, by Miss Seward's inquiries, and I would have Susan think so too; the humbler one's heart is, the more one's pride is gratified, if one may use so apparently Irish an expression, but the meaning of it does not lie deep. They who are too proud to care whether they please or no, lose much delight themselves, and give none to their neighbours. Mrs. Porter is in a bad way, and that makes you melancholy; the visits to Stowhill will this year be more frequent than ever. I am glad Watts's Improvement of the Mind is a favourite book among the Lichfield ladies; it is so pious, so wise, so easy a book to read for any person, and so useful, nay necessary, are its precepts to us all, that I never cease recommending it to our young ones. It is *à la portée de chacun* so, yet never vulgar; but Law beats him for wit; and the names are never happy in

Watts somehow. I fancy there was no comparison between the scholastic learning of the two writers; but there is prodigious knowledge of the human heart, and perfect acquaintance with common life in the Serious Call. You used to say you would not trust me with that author up-stairs on the dressing-room shelf, yet I now half wish I had never followed any precepts but his. Our lasses, indeed, might possibly object to the education given her daughters by Law's Eusebia.

That the ball did so little towards diverting you, I do not wonder: what can a ball do towards diverting any one who has not other hopes and other designs than barely to see people dance, or even to dance himself? They who are entertained *at* the ball are never much amused *by* the ball I believe, yet I love the dance on Queeney's birth-day and yours, where none but very honest and very praise-worthy passions, if passions they can be called, heighten the mirth and gaiety. It has been thought by many wise folks, that we fritter our pleasures all away by refinement, and when one reads Goldsmith's works, either verse or prose, one fancies that in corrupt life there is more enjoyment—yet we should find little solace from alehouse merriment or cottage carousals, whatever *the best wrestler on the green* might do I suppose; mere brandy and brown sugar *liqueur*, like that which Foote presented the Cherokee kings with, and won their hearts from our fine ladies, who treated them with sponge biscuits and Frontiniac. I am glad Queeney and you are to resolve so stoutly, and labour so violently; such a union may make her wiser and you happier, and can give me nothing but delight.

We read a good deal here in your absence, that is, *I* do: it is better we sate all together than in separate rooms; better that I read than not: and better that I should never read what is not fit for the young ones to hear: besides, I am sure they *must* hear that which I read *out* to them, and so one saves the trouble of commanding what one knows will never be obeyed.—I can find no other way as well.

Come home, however, for it is dull living without you.—Sir Philip and Mr. Selwin call very often, and are exceedingly kind. I see them always with gratitude and pleasure; but as the first has left us now for a month, come home therefore. You are not happy away, and I fear I shall never be happy again in this world between one thing and another. My health, flesh, and complexion are quite lost, and I shall have a red face if I live, and that will be mighty detestable—a humpback would be less offensive vastly.

This is the time for fading: the year is fading round us, and every day shuts in more dismally than the last did. I never passed so melancholy a summer, though I have passed some that were more painful; privation is indeed supposed to be worse than pain.

Instead of trying the Sortes Virgilianæ for our absent friends, we agreed after dinner to-day to ask little Harriet what they were doing now who used to be our common guests at Streatham. Dr. Johnson (says she) is very rich and wise, Sir Philip is drowned in the water—and Mr. Piozzi is very sick and lame, poor man! What a curious way of deciding! all in her little soft voice. Was not there a custom among the ancients in some country—it is mentioned in Herodotus, if I remember right—that they took that method of inquiring into futurity from the mouths of infants under three years old?—but I will not swear to the book I have read it in. The scriptural expression, however, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, &c.* is likely enough to allude to it, if it were once a general practice. In Ireland, where the peasants are mad after play, particularly back-gammon, Mr. Murphy says, they will even, when deprived of the necessaries for continuing so favourite a game, cut the turf in a clean spot of green sward and make it into tables for that amusement, setting a little baby boy behind the hedge to call their throws for them, and supply with his unconscious decisions the place of box and dice.

Adieu, dear Sir, and be as cheerful as you can this gloomy season. I see nobody happy hereabouts but the Burneys; they love each other with uncommon warmth of family affection, and are beloved by the world as much as if their fondness were less concentrated. The Captain has got a fifty-gun ship now, and we are all *so* rejoiced. Once more farewell,

farewell, and do not forget Streatham nor its inhabitants, who are all much yours—and most so of all, your faithful servant.

We never name Mr. Newton, of Lichfield; I hope neither he nor his fine China begin to break yet———of other friends there the accounts get very bad to be sure.

LETTER XCVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, Ashbourne, Nov. 12, 1781.

I have a mind to look on Queeney as my own dear girl; and if I set her a bad example, I ought to counteract it by good precepts; and he that knows the consequences of any fault is best qualified to tell them. I have through my whole progress of authorship honestly endeavoured to teach the right, though I have not been sufficiently diligent to practise it, and have offered mankind my opinion as a rule, but never professed my behaviour as an example.

I shall be very sorry to lose Mr.——, but why should he so certainly die? *** needed not have died if he had tried to live. If Mr.——will drink a great deal of water, the acrimony that corrodes his bowels will be diluted, if the cause be only acrimony; but I suspect dysenteries to be produced by animalcula, which I know not how to kill.

If the medical man did me good, it was by his benevolence; by his pills I never mended. I am, however, rather better than I was.

Dear Mrs. - —, she has the courage becoming an admiral's lady, but courage is no virtue in her cause.

I have been at Lichfield persecuted with solicitations to read a poem; but I sent the author word, that I would never review the work of an anonymous author; for why should I put my name in the power of one who will not trust me with his own? With this answer Lucy was satisfied, and I think it may satisfy all whom it may concern.

If C——y did nothing for life but add weight to its burden, and darkness to its gloom, he is kindest to those from whom he is farthest. I hope, when I come, not to advance perhaps your pleasures, though even of that I shall be unwilling to despair; but at least not to increase your inconveniences, which would be a very unsuitable return for all the kindness that you have shown to, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER XCVII.

The same to the same.

Ashbourne,
Dearest Madam, Nov. 14, 1781.

Here is Doctor Taylor, by a resolute adherence to bread and milk, with a better appearance of health than he has had for a long time past: and here am I, living very temperately, but with very little amendment. But the balance is not perhaps very unequal: he has no pleasure like that which I receive from the kind importunity with which you invite me to return. There is no danger of very long delay. There is nothing in this part of the world that can counteract your attraction.

The hurt in my leg has grown well slowly, according to Hector's prognostic, and seems now to be almost healed: but my nights are very restless, and the days are therefore heavy, and I have not your conversation to cheer them.

I am willing, however, to hear that there is happiness in the world, and delight to think on the pleasure diffused among the Burneys. I question if any ship upon the ocean goes out attended with more good wishes than that which carries the fate of Burney. I love all of that breed whom I can be said to know, and one or two whom I hardly know I love upon credit, and love them because they love each other. Of this consanguineous unanimity I have had never much experience; but it appears to me one of the great lenitives of life; but it has this deficience, that it is never found when distress is mutual—He that has less than enough for himself has nothing to spare, and as every man feels only his own necessities, he is apt to think those of others less pressing, and to accuse them of withholding what in truth they cannot give. He that has his foot firm upon dry ground may pluck another out of the water; but of those that are all afloat, none has any care but for himself.

We do not hear that the deanery is yet given away, and, though nothing is said, I believe much is still thought about it. *Hope travels through*——

I am, dearest of all dear ladies, your, &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson.

Dear Sir. Streatham, June 14.

I am glad you confess yourself peevish, for confession must precede amendment. Do not study to be more unhappy than you are, and if you can eat and sleep well, do not be frighted, for there can be no real danger. Are you acquainted with Dr. Lee, the Master of Baliol College? And are you not delighted with his gaiety of manners and youthful vivacity now that he is eighty-six years old? I never heard a more perfect or excellent pun than his, when some one told him how in a late dispute among the Privy counsellors, the Lord Chancellor struck the table with such violence that he split it: No, no, no, replied the master dryly, I can hardly persuade myself that *he split the Table*, though I believe *he divided the Board*. Will you send me any thing better from Oxford than this? for there must be no more fastidiousness now; no more refusing to laugh at a good quibble, when you so loudly profess the want of amusement and the necessity of diversion. How the people of this age do cry for rattles is indeed little to its credit, for knowledge is diffused most certainly, if not increased, and that ought to stand instead of perpetual variety one would think. Apropos to general improvement: I was reading the Spectator to Sophy while my maid prepared my curls yester-morning; it was the 3d vol. 217, where the man complains of an indelicate mistress, who said on some occasion that her stomach ached, and lamented how her teeth had got a seed stuck between them.—The woman that dressed me was so astonished at this grossness, though common enough in Addison's time one sees, that she cried out, Well, Madam! surely that could never have been *a lady* who used expressions like those.

I much wonder whether this refinement has spread all over the continent, or whether it is confined to our own island: when we were in France we could form little judgment, as our time was passed chiefly among English; yet I recollect that one fine lady, who entertained us very splendidly, put her mouth to the tea pot, and blew in the spout when it did not pour freely. My maid Peggy would not have touched the tea after such an operation. Was it convenient, and agreeable, and wise, and fine, I should like to see the world *beyond sea* very much!

> But fate has fast bound her
> With Styx nine times round her.

So your friend must look on the waves at Brighthelmston without breathing a wish to cross them.

Mean time let us be as *merry* as reading Burton upon *Melancholy* will make us. You bid me study that book in your absence, and now, What have I found? Why, I have found, or fancied, that he has been cruelly plundered: that Milton's first idea of L'Allegro and Il Penseroso were suggested by the verses at the beginning; that Savage's Speech of Suicide in the Wanderer, grew up out of a passage you probably remember towards the 216th page; that Swift's Tale of the Woman that holds water in her mouth, to regain her husband's love by silence, had its source in the same farrago; and that there is an odd similitude between my Lord's trick upon Sly the Tinker, in Shakespear's Taming of the Shrew, and some stuff I have been reading in Burton.

And now, dear Sir, be as comfortable as you can, and do not dun me for that kindness which has never been withheld, only because it is cold weather and you want employment; but be gentle and tranquil like Dr. Adams, or gay and flashy like Dr. Lee, and then——what then? Why then you will deserve Miss Adams's good-will, and Miss More's esteem, added to the humble service and attentive regard of your ever equally faithful, &c.

Sir Richard asks after you with very tender care indeed: what would you have of us all that you cannot command? He is among those who would do any thing in the world to oblige you.

LETTER XCIX.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Hector in Birmingham.

[*Without a date, but supposed to be about this time.*]

Dear Sir,

THAT you and dear Mrs. Careless should have care or curiosity about my health, gives me that pleasure which every man feels from finding himself not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends, which, in the bustle or amusements of middle life, were overborne and suspended. You and I should now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived most of those who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindness. In our walk through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up such as chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. You, indeed, have a sister, with whom you can divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleased to preserve me from neglect; I have not wanted such alleviations of life as friendship could supply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, such as has seldom afforded me a single day of ease; but it is at least not worse: and I sometimes make myself believe that it is better. My disorders are, however, still sufficiently oppressive.

I think of seeing Staffordshire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to see you and dear Mrs. Careless well, I am, Sir, your affectionate friend.

LETTER C.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

Dear Sir, London, March 28, 1782.

THE pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must this year be content to miss. Let us, however, pray for each other, and hope to see one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My disorder has been a cold, which impeded the organs of respiration, and kept me many weeks in a state of great uneasiness, but by repeated phlebotomy is now relieved; and, next to the recovery of Mrs. Boswell, I flatter myself that you will rejoice at mine.

What we shall do in the summer it is yet too early to consider. You want to know what you shall do now; I do not think this time of bustle and confusion likely to produce any advantage to you. Every man has those to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with such expectations at the expense of borrowed money, which, I find you know not where to borrow, can hardly be considered as prudent. I am sorry to find, what your solicitation seems to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at last inherit nothing; all that you receive must pay for the past. You must get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great estate. Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have, live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure; the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret; stay therefore at home till you have saved money for your journey hither.

'The Beauties of Johnson' are said to have got money to the collector; if the 'Deformities' have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who is, I hope, reconciled to me; and to the young people, whom I never have offended.

You never told me the success of your plea against the solicitors. I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CI.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, London, June 3, 1782.

THE earnestness and tenderness of your letter is such, that I cannot think myself shewing it more respect than it claims by sitting down to answer it the day on which I received it.

This year has afflicted me with a very irksome and severe disorder. My respi-

ration has been much impeded, and much blood has been taken away. I am now harassed by a catarrhous cough, from which my purpose is to seek relief by change of air; and I am, therefore, preparing to go to Oxford.

Whether I did right in dissuading you from coming to London this spring, I will not determine. You have not lost much by missing my company; I have scarcely been well for a single week. I might have received comfort from your kindness; but you would have seen me afflicted, and, perhaps, found me peevish. Whatever might have been your pleasure or mine, I know not how I could have honestly advised you to come hither with borrowed money. Do not accustom yourself to consider debts only as an inconvenience: you will find it a calamity. Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. Consider a man whose fortune is very narrow; whatever be his rank, by birth, or whatever his reputation by intellectual excellence, what good can he do? or what evil can he prevent? That he cannot help the needy is evident, he has nothing to spare. But, perhaps, his advice or admonition may be useful. His poverty will destroy his influence: many more can find that he is poor, than that he is wise; and few will reverence the understanding that is of so little advantage to its owner. I say nothing of the personal wretchedness of a debtor, which, however, has passed into a proverb. Of riches it is not necessary to write the praise. Let it, however, be remembered, that he who has money to spare, has it always in his power to benefit others; and of such power a good man must always be desirous.

I am pleased with your account of Easter. We shall meet, I hope, in autumn, both well and both cheerful; and part each the better for the other's company.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and to the young charmers. I am, &c.

LETTER CII.

Dr. Johnson to James Boswell, Esq.

Dear Sir, London, Sept. 7, 1782.

I HAVE struggled through this year with so much infirmity of body, and such strong impressions of fragility of life, that death, wherever it appears, fills me with melancholy: and I cannot hear without emotion, of the removal of any one, whom I have known, into another state.

Your father's death had every circumstance that could enable you to bear it; it was at a mature age, and it was expected; and as his general life had been pious, his thoughts had doubtless for many years past been turned upon eternity. That you did not find him sensible must doubtless grieve you; his disposition towards you was undoubtedly that of a kind, though not of a fond father. Kindness, at least actual, is in our power, but fondness is not; and if by negligence or imprudence you had extinguished his fondness, he could not at will rekindle it. Nothing then remained between you but mutual forgiveness of each other's faults, and mutual desire of each other's happiness.

I shall long to know his final disposition of his fortune.

You, dear Sir, have now a new station, and have therefore new cares, and new employments. Life, as Cowley seems to say, ought to resemble a well ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium should be simple, and should promise little. Begin your new course of life with the least show, and the least expense possible; you may at pleasure increase both, but you cannot easily diminish them. Do not think your estate your own, while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay; therefore, begin with timorous parsimony. Let it be your first care not to be in any man's debt.

When the thoughts are extended to a future state, the present life seems hardly worthy of all those principles of conduct, and maxims of prudence, which one generation of men has transmitted to another; but upon a closer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced, and how much good is impeded by embarrassment

barrassment and distress, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exercise of virtue; its sorrows manifest that the boundless importance of the next life enforces some attention to the interests of this.

Be kind to the old servants, and secure the kindness of the agents and factors; do not disgust them by asperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent suspicion. From them you must learn the real state of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell; I think her expectation from air and exercise are the best that she can form. I hope she will live long and happily.

I forgot whether I told you that Rasay has been here; we dined cheerfully together. I entertained lately a young gentleman from Coriatachat.

I received your letters only this morning. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER CIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir; London, Dec. 7, 1782.

HAVING passed almost this whole year in a succession of disorders, I went in October to Brighthelmston, whither I came in a state of so much weakness, that I rested four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By physic and abstinence I grew better, and am now reasonably easy, though at a great distance from health, I am afraid, however, that health begins, after seventy, and often long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives, must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die, has God to thank for the infirmities of old age.

At your long silence I am rather angry. You do not, since now you are the head of your house, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing, nor suspect after so many years of friendship, that when I do not write to you I forget you. Put all such useless jealousies out of your head, and disdain to regulate your own practice by the practice of another, or by any other principle than the desire of doing right.

Your œconomy, I suppose, begins now to be settled; your expenses are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor: whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness, it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

Let me know the history of your life, since your accession to your estate. How many houses, how many cows, how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * * *

Of my 'Lives of the Poets,' they have printed a new edition in Octavo, I hear, of three thousand. Did I give a set to Lord Hailes? If I did not, I will do it out of these. What did you make of all your copy?

Mrs. Thrale and the three Misses are now for the winter, in Argyll-street. Sir Joshua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again; and I am, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant.

LETTER CIV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, May day, 1783.

I AM glad that you went to Streatham, though you could not save the dear pretty little girl. I loved her, for she was Thrale's and yours, and by her dear father's appointment in some sort mine: I love you all, and therefore cannot without regret see the phalanx broken, and reflect that you and my other dear girls are deprived of one that was born your friend. To such friends, every one that has them, has recourse at last, when it is discovered, and discovered it seldom fails to be, that the fortuitous friendships of inclination or vanity are at the mercy of a thousand accidents. But we must still our disquiet with remembering that, where there is no guilt, all is for the best. I am glad to hear that Cecily is so near recovery.

For some days after your departure I was pretty well, but I have begun to languish again, and last night was very te-

dious and oppressive. I excused myself to-day from dining with General Paoli, where I love to dine, but I was griped by the talons of necessity.

On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators staying one with another each an hour, the rooms never had fewer than three hundred and eighty justling against each other. Poor Lowe met some discouragement, but I interposed for him, and prevailed.

Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it, which, if you read it, you will find decorated with some satirical pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must however think with some esteem of Barry for the comprehension of his design. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CV.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson.

Bath, June 15, 1783.

I BELIEVE it is too true, my dear Sir, that you think on little except yourself and your own health, but then they are subjects on which every one else would think too—and that is a great consolation.

I am willing enough to employ all my thoughts upon *myself*, but there is nobody here who wishes to think with or about me, so I am very sick and a little sullen, and disposed now and then to say like king David, *My lovers and my friends have been put away from me, and my acquaintance hid out of my sight.* If the last letter I wrote showed some degree of placid acquiescence in a situation, which, however displeasing, is the best I can get at just now;—I pray God to keep me in that disposition, and to lay no more calamity upon me which may again tempt me to murmur and complain. In the mean time assure yourself of my undiminished kindness and veneration: they have been long out of accident's power either to lessen or increase.

So Mr. Seward is going abroad again. I see no harm in his resolution, though the manner of his expressing it was likely enough to offend you: yet he is not a man whom any one can justly reproach with negligence of duty; he does more good than almost any person of twice his fortune, and while he is looking at the works of Claude Loraine he will certainly be doing no mischief.

The professors of *ennui* are a very dangerous race of mortals; for preferring any occupation to none, they are liable to make many people unhappy by their officious assiduities, while to themselves they stand perfectly exculpated by the remark that *a man must do something—or be killed with ennui:* how fortunate for society, when like Seward they seek only to give away their money all winter to persons who want it, and go to Flanders in summer to look at the Claude Loraines.

What Miss H——had suffered before our acquaintance began I know not. She now endures much from real, and more from fancied illness. Her talents are uncommon for work, and she is a proof that work will not suffice to keep the imagination quiet. She feels like Pekuah, that *the mind will easily* straggle from *the fingers*, and that *misery of heart cannot be much solaced by silken flowers.*

Poor Dr. Lawrence and his son are dead then: I am very sorry; he was among the few parents I have known who preferred the virtue and happiness of their children to the delight of seeing them grow rich and splendid; and you once told me, that one of his sons (I never heard which) was early bent on obtaining that opulence which is as seldom sought for by youth—Is it that boy who is now dead?

That *you* should be solitary is a sad thing, and a strange one too, when every body is willing to drop in, and for a quarter of an hour at least, save you from a *tête à tête* with yourself: I never could catch a moment when you were alone whilst we were in London, and Miss Thrale says the same thing. It would have been a fine advantage indeed could she have seen Oxford now in your company; when

we

we enjoyed it she was too young to profit of the circumstance. It is so throughout the world I believe: nothing happens of good to us while we can fully use it: every little felicity which does come, comes at a time when waiting for it has spoiled our appetite——

> When youth and genial years are flown,
> And all the life of life is gone.

Could I however flatter myself with the hopes of a fine clear evening after my various day, I would bear the afternoon storms better than I do—and who knows that it is yet impossible?

Farewell, dear Sir: had I health and spirits as I used to have, I would write as I used to do; but I had then a husband and sons, and for a long time after I knew you, a mother such as no one ever had but me, and such as I sincerely wish my daughters were likely to have in your truly faithful servant.

LETTER CVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Bolt-court, Fleet-street.

Dearest Madam, June 19, 1783.

I AM sitting down in no cheerful solitude to write a narrative which would once have affected you with tenderness and sorrow, but which you will perhaps pass over now with the careless glance of frigid indifference. For this diminution of regard, however, I know not whether I ought to blame you, who may have reasons which I cannot know, and I do not blame myself, who have for a great part of human life done you what good I could, and have never done you evil.

I had been disordered in the usual way, and had been relieved by the usual methods, by opium and cathartics, but had rather lessened my dose of opium.

On Monday the 16th I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted I suppose about half a minute; I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytic stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself when it should come would excite less horror than seems now to attend it.

In order to rouse the vocal organs I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and strange as it may seem, I think, slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand; I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand to act as occasion should require. In penning his note I had some difficulty; my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden, and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly, and very disinterested, and give me great hopes, but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

How this will be received by you I know not. I hope you will sympathise with me; but perhaps

> My mistress, gracious, mild, and good,
> Cries, Is he dumb? 'Tis time he shou'd.

But can this be possible? I hope it cannot.

not. I hope that what, when I could speak, I spoke of you, and to you, will be in a sober and serious hour remembered by you; and surely it cannot be remembered but with some degree of kindness. I have loved you with virtuous affection; I have honoured you with sincere esteem. Let not all our endearments be forgotten, but let me have in this great distress your pity and your prayers. You see I yet turn to you with my complaints as a settled and unalienable friend; do not, do not drive me from you, for I have not deserved either neglect or hatred.

To the girls, who do not write often, for Susy has written only once, and Miss Thrale owes me a letter, I earnestly recommend, as their guardian and friend, that they remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

I suppose you may wish to know how my disease is treated by the physicians. They put a blister upon my back, and two from my ear to my throat, one on a side. The blister on the back has done little, and those on the throat have not risen. I bullied and bounced (it sticks to our last sand), and compelled the apothecary to make his salve according to the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that it might adhere better. I have two on now of my own prescription. They likewise give me salt of hartshorn, which I take with no great confidence, but am satisfied that what can be done is done for me.

O God! give me comfort and confidence in Thee: forgive my sins; and if it be thy good pleasure, relieve my diseases for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I am almost ashamed of this querulous letter; but now it is written, let it go. I am, &c.

LETTER CVII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, July 3, 1783.

DR. Brocklesby yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well, and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of daylight again; but how near is the evening—none can tell, and I will not prognosticate; we all know that from none of us it can be far distant; may none of us know this in vain!

I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday, to the club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual. I dined on fish, with the wing of a small Turkey chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison pye untouched. I live much on peas, and never had them so good, for so long a time, in any year that I can remember.

When do you go to Weymouth? and why do you go? only I suppose to a new place, and the reason is sufficient to those who have no reason to withhold them.

* * * knows well enough how to live on four hundred a year, but where is he to have it? Had * * * any thing of his own unsettled?

I am glad that Mrs. Seward talks of me, and loves me, and have in this still scene of life great comfort in reflecting that I have given very few reason to hate me; I hope scarcely any man has known me closely but for his benefit, or cursorily but to his innocent entertainment. Tell me, you that know me best, whether this be true, that according to your answer I may continue my practice, or try to mend it.

Along with your kind letter yesterday came one likewise very kind from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far, though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Susannah Thrale.

Dearest Miss Susy,

WHEN you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures either of peril or delight, nor done nor suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation

sation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denominate us wise or foolish; happy or miserable: if it is well regulated we pass on prosperously and smoothly; as it is neglected we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes I suppose, in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account; and of work, unless I understood it better, it will be of no great use to say much; but books and company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions.

A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening; and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to your, &c.

LETTER CIX.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Sophia Thrale.

London,
Dearest Miss Sophy, July 24, 1783.

BY an absence from home, and for one reason and another, I owe a great number of letters, and I assure you that I sit down to write yours first. Why you should think yourself not a favourite I cannot guess; my favour will, I am afraid, never be worth much; but be its value more or less, you are never likely to lose it, and less likely if you continue your studies with the same diligence as you have begun them.

Your proficiency in arithmetic is not only to be commended, but admired. Your master does not, I suppose, come very often, nor stay very long; yet your advance in the science of numbers is greater than is commonly made by those who, for so many weeks as you have been learning, spend six hours a day in the writing school.

Never think, my sweet, that you have arithmetic enough; when you have exhausted your master, buy books. Nothing amuses more harmlessly than computation, and nothing is oftener applicable to real business or speculative inquiries. A thousand stories which the ignorant tell, and believe, die away at once, when the computist takes them in his gripe. I hope you will cultivate in yourself a disposition to numerical inquiries; they will give you entertainment in solitude by the practice, and reputation in public by the effect.

If you can borrow *Wilkin's Real Character*, a folio, which the bookseller can perhaps let you have, you will have a very curious calculation, which you are qualified to consider, to show that Noah's ark was capable of holding all the known animals of the world, with provision for all the time in which the earth was under water. Let me hear from you soon again. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CX.

Dr. Johnson to Miss Susanna Thrale.

London,
Dear Miss Susan, July 26, 1783.

I ANSWER your letter last, because it was received last; and when I have answered it, I am out of debt to your house. A short negligence throws one behind hand. This maxim, if you consider and improve it, will be equivalent to your parson and bird, which is however a very good story, as it shows how far gluttony may proceed, which, where it prevails, is I think more violent, and certainly more despicable, than avarice itself.

Gluttony is, I think, less common among women, than among men. Women commonly eat more sparingly, and are less curious in the choice of meat; but if once you find a woman gluttonous, expect from her very little virtue. Her mind is enslaved to the lowest and grossest temptation.

A friend of mine, who courted a lady of whom he did not know much, was advised to see her eat, and if she was voluptuous at table, to forsake her. He married her, however, and in a few weeks came to his adviser with this exclamation, "It is the disturbance of my life to

"see

"see this woman eat!" She was, as might be expected, selfish and brutal, and after some years of discord they parted, and I believe came together no more.

Of men, the examples are sufficiently common. I had a friend, of great eminence in the learned and the witty world, who had hung up some pots on his wall to furnish nests for sparrows. The poor sparrows, not knowing his character, were seduced by the convenience, and I never heard any man speak of any future enjoyment with such contortions of delight as he exhibited, when he talked of eating the young ones.

When you do me the favour to write again, tell me something of your studies, your work, or your amusements. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Aug. 13, 1783.

YOUR letter was brought just as I was complaining that you had forgotten me.

I am glad that the ladies find so much novelty at Weymouth. Ovid says, that the sun is undelightfully uniform. They had some expectations of shells, which both by their form and colours have a claim to human curiosity. Of all the wonders, I have had no account, except that Miss Thrale seems pleased with your little voyages.

Sophy mentioned a story which her sisters would not suffer her to tell, because they would tell it themselves, but it has never yet been told me.

Mrs. Ing is, I think, a baronet's daughter, of an ancient house in Staffordshire. Of her husband's father mention is made in the life of Ambrose Phillips.

Of this world, in which you represent me as delighting to live, I can say little. Since I came home I have only been to church, once to Burney's, once to Paradise's, and once to Reynolds's. With Burney I saw Dr. Rose, his new relation, with whom I have been many years acquainted. If I discovered no reliques of disease I am glad, but Fanny's trade is fiction.

I have since partaken of an epidemical disorder, but common evils produce no dejection.

Paradise's company, I fancy, disappointed him; I remember nobody. With Reynolds was the Archbishop of Tuam, a man coarse of voice and inelegant of language.

I am now broken with disease, without the alleviation of familiar friendship or domestic society; I have no middle state between clamour and silence, between general conversation and self-tormenting solitude. Levet is dead, and poor Williams is making haste to die: I know not if she will ever more come out of her chamber.

I am now quite alone, but let me turn my thoughts another way. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXII.

The same to the same.

Madam, London, Aug. 20, 1780.

THIS has been a day of great emotion; the office of the Communion of the Sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. She was too weak to rise from her bed, and is therefore to be supposed unlikely to live much longer. She has, I hope, little violent pain, but is wearing out by torpid inappetence and wearisome decay: but all the powers of her mind are in their full vigour, and when she has spirits enough for conversation, she possesses all the intellectual excellence that she ever had. Surely this is an instance of mercy much to be desired by a parting soul.

At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be in vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very chearful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy.

I read your last kind letter with great delight: but when I came to *love* and *honour*, what sprung in my mind?—How loved

loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear ;* at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine. I told her it was *Johnson's grimly Ghost.* It is to be engraved, and I think *in gilded,* &c. will be a good inscription. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, Sept. 22, 1783.

HAPPY are you that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air balloons. Their existence is I believe indubitable ; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use. The construction is this :—The chemical philosophers have discovered a body (which I have forgotten, but will inquire) which dissolved by an acid, emits a vapour lighter than the atmospherical air. This vapour is caught, among other means, by tying a bladder, compressed upon the bottle in which the dissolution is performed ; the vapour rising swells the bladder, and fills it. The bladder is then tied and removed, and another applied, till as much of this light air is collected as is wanted. Then a large spherical case is made, and very large it must be, of the lightest matter that can be found, secured by some method, like that of oiling silk, against all passage of air. Into this are emptied all the bladders of light air, and if there is light air enough it mounts into the clouds, upon the same principle as a bottle filled with water, will sink in water, but a bottle filled with ether would float. It rises till it comes to air of equal tenuity with its own, if wind or water does not spoil it on the way. Such, Madam, is an air balloon.

Meteors have been this autumn very often seen, but I have never been in their way.

Poor Williams has I hope seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence, and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

> Thou thy weary task hast done,
> Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.

Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity school.

The complaint about which you inquire is a sarcocele; I thought it a hydrocele, and heeded it but little. Puncture has detected the mistake : it can be safely suffered no longer. Upon inspection three days ago it was determined *extrema ventura.* If excision should be delayed there is danger of a gangrene. You would not have me for fear of pain perish in putrefaction. I shall, I hope, with trust in eternal mercy, lay hold of the possibility of life which yet remains. My health is not bad ; the gout is now trying at my feet. My appetite and digestion are good, and my sleep better than formerly : I am not dejected, and I am not feeble. There is however danger enough in such operations at seventy-four.

Let me have your prayers and those of the young dear people. I am, dear Madam, your, &c.

Write soon and often.

LETTER CXIV.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Nov. 13, 1783.

SINCE you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time, your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good-will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished, but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for a while be suppressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel, or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the

the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost, but an *old friend* never can be found, and Nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

I have not forgotten the Davenants, though they seem to have forgotten me. I began very early to tell them what they have commonly found to be true. I am sorry to hear of their building. I have always warned those whom I loved against that mode of ostentatious waste.

You seem to mention Lord Kilmurry as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with Sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no* park? he could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no* venison.

The frequency of death, to those who look upon it in the leisure of Arcadia, is very dreadful. We all know what it should teach us; let us all be diligent to learn. Lucy Porter has lost her brother. But whom I have lost—let me not now remember. Let not your loss be added to the mournful catalogue. Write soon again to, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXV.

Dr. Johnson to Miss S. A. Thrale.

Dear Miss, Nov. 18, 1783.

HERE is a whole week, and nothing heard from your house. Baretti said what a wicked house it would be, and a wicked house it is. Of you, however, I have no complaint to make, for I owe you a letter. Still I live here by my own self, and have had of late very bad nights; but then I have had a pig to dinner, which Mr. Perkins gave me. Thus life is chequered.

I cannot tell you much news, because I see nobody that you know. Do you read the Tatlers? They are part of the books which every body should read, because they are the sources of conversation, therefore make them part of your library. Bickerstaff, in the Tatler, gives us a specimen of familiar letters, on account of his cat. I could tell you as good things of Lily the white Kitling, who is now at full growth; and very well behaved; but I do not see why we should descend below human beings, and of one human being I can tell something that you will like to hear.

A friend, whose name I will tell when your mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to inquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into any difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow.

I have seen Mr. Seward since his return only once; he gave no florid account of my mistress's health. Tell her that I hearken every day after a letter from her, and do not be long before you write yourself to, my dear, your, &c.

LETTER CXVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Nov. 20, 1783.

I BEGAN to grieve and wonder that I had no letter, but not being much accustomed to fetch in evil by circumspection or anticipation, did not suspect that the omission had so dreadful a cause as the sickness of one of my dears. As her physician thought so well of her when you wrote, I hope she is now out of danger. You do not tell me her disease; and perhaps have not been able yourself fully to understand it. I hope it is not of the cephalic race.

That frigid stillness with which my pretty Sophy melts away, exhibits a temper very incommodious in sickness, and by no means amiable in the tenor of life. Incommunicative taciturnity neither imparts nor invites friendship, but reposes on a stubborn sufficiency self-centered, and neglects the interchange of that social officiousness by which we are habitually endeared to one another. They that mean to make no use of friends will be at little trouble to gain them; and to be without friendship is to be without one of the first comforts of our present state. To have no assistance from other minds, in resolving doubts, in appeasing scruples, in balancing deliberations, is a very wretched destitution. If therefore my loves have this silence by temper, do not let them have it by principle; show them that it is a perverse and inordinate disposition, which must be counteracted and reformed. Have I said enough?

Poor

Poor Dr. Taylor represents himself as ill; and I am afraid is worse than in the summer. My nights are very bad; but of the sarcocele I have now little but the memory. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXVII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Chapone.

Madam, Nov. 28, 1783.

By sending the tragedy to me a second time* I think that a very honourable distinction has been shown me, and I did not delay the perusal, of which I am now to tell the effect.

The construction of the play is not completely regular; the stage is too often vacant, and the scenes are not sufficiently connected. This, however, would be called by Dryden only a mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is seen rather than felt.

A rigid examiner of the diction might, perhaps, wish some words changed, and some lines more vigorously terminated. But from such petty imperfections what writer was ever free?

The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It seems to want that quickness of reciprocation which characterises the English drama, and is not always sufficiently fervid or animated.

Of the sentiments, I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy succeeding grief, to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please. It is new, just, and delightful †.

With the characters, either as conceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the Archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

The catastrophe is affecting. The father and daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our sorrow.

Thus, Madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuse. The noble writer will be pleased to remember, that sincere criticism ought to raise no resentment because judgment is not under the control of will; but involuntary criticism, as it has still less of choice, ought to be more remote from possibility of offence. I am, &c.

LETTER CXVIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Nov. 29, 1783.

The life of my dear, sweet, pretty, lovely, delicious Miss Sophy is safe; let us return thanks to the great Giver of existence, and pray that her continuance amongst us may be a blessing to herself and to those that love her. *Multos et felices*, my dear girl.

Now she is recovered, she must write me a little history of her sufferings, and impart her schemes of study and improvement. Life, to be worthy of a rational being, must be always in progression; we must always purpose to do more or better than in time past. The mind is enlarged and elevated by mere purposes, though they end as they begin, by airy contemplation. We compare and judge, though we do not practise.

She will go back to her arithmetic again; a science which will always delight her more, as by advancing further she discerns more of its use, and a science suited to Sophy's ease of mind; for you told in the last winter that she loved metaphysics more than romances. Her choice is certainly as laudable as it is uncommon; but I would have her like what is good in both.

God bless you and your children; so says, dear Madam, your old friend.

LETTER

* Dr. Johnson, having been very ill when the tragedy was first sent to him, had declined the consideration of it.

† "I could have borne my woes; that stranger Joy
Wounds while it smiles;—The long imprison'd wretch,
Emerging from the night of his dampcell,
Shrinks from the sun's bright beams; and that which flings
Gladness over all, to him is agony."

LETTER CXIX.

Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson.

Nov. 30, 1783.

I AM very ill indeed, my dear Sir, but our pretty Sophy being now so *near* at least to recovery, my fingers are grown more steady, and I will endeavour to write without agitation once again. She has had a severe illness; so severe, that few men however wise or strong would have endured it with greater resolution. The sullen courage you speak of in the letter dated twenty is certainly not pleasing; but the more one lives on to see softness seduced, flexibility despised, and gentleness insulted, the more contentedly one bears with a disposition so different from one's own. There is a good deal of body too in all this; a good deal of this temper I mean seems connected with corporeal causes, and cephalic disorders seem to haunt people of that turn more than others; who, though they may be tortured by various maladies, are seldom afflicted with those dreadful headachs that enchain the faculties, as if by magic, and render complaint nearly as difficult as recovery. Sophia will return to the study of arithmetic in proper time; it appears to me a study well suited to one who has a distaste to fiction because it resembles falsehood. If truth can be found in any sublunary science, numbers will produce it, for to that at last almost all other sciences refer for confirmation.

Were the mother as likely to enjoy life and health again as the daughter is, she would perhaps struggle to obtain the advantage of Mr. Herschel's acquaintance. This famous astronomer, whose discoveries, or whose hope of future discoveries, begin to fill the mouths of our Bath talkers, and I fancy my friend Mrs. Lewis could introduce me, though God knows she as well as myself have nearer concerns to puzzle about than lunar ones; and indeed when I think upon the desperate state of oblivion into which are fallen the wonders promised by Helvetius, and that *selenography* which I believe procured him a pension too from Lewis the Fourteenth, my heart recoils at the name of astronomical discoveries, and trembles lest the star of King George should in some future age be consigned to keep company with the firmament of John Sobieski. In the mean time who can help smiling at the expressions used by Derham, Ray, and others, who write on these subjects, and fancy they are exalting the glory of God when they tell us, in what a *workman-like* manner he has made the world, &c.? You hate all notion of national character I know, yet it is difficult to deny that none but a *true Briton* could think in such a manner when praising his Creator; as it is impossible not to discern the Frenchman in archbishop Fenelon's latter conversations when he says, *Si j' aurai l'honneur de voir Dieu je ne manquerai guères de lui raccomander bien l' ame du* Roi de France. I have not his life with me here, but have a notion those are the very words.

You will not suspect me of wanting respect for these worthies: what christian lives who can refuse his reverence to Cambray's piety or Derham's learning? But you will have me write, and I am miserably ill, very peevish and very perverse, and it were better you quarrelled with me about departed philosophers, than that you accused me of wanting good-will towards you, of whom no person living can think more highly than does, dear Sir, your faithful humble servant.

The girls will write soon, and tell you all our conjectures.

LETTER CXX.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Dec. 27, 1783.

THE wearisome solitude of the long evenings did indeed suggest to me the convenience of a club in my neighbourhood, but I have been hindered from attending it by want of breath. If I can complete the scheme, you shall have the names and the regulations.

The time of the year, for I hope the fault is rather in the weather than in me, has been very hard upon me. The muscles of my breast are much convulsed. Dr. Heberden recommends opiates, of which I have such horror that I do not think of them but *in extremes*. I was however driven to them last night for refuge

fuge, and having taken the usual quantity, durst not go to bed, for fear of that uneasiness to which a supine posture exposes me, but rested all night in a chair with much relief, and have been to-day more warm, active, and cheerful.

You have more than once wondered at my complaint of solitude, when you hear that I am crowded with visits. *Inopem me copia fecit.* Visitors are no proper companions in the chamber of sickness. They come when I could sleep or read, they stay till I am weary, they force me to attend when my mind calls for relaxation, and to speak when my powers will hardly actuate my tongue. The amusements and consolations of languor and depression are conferred by familiar and domestic companions, which can be visited or called at will, and can occasionally be quitted or dismissed, who do not obstruct accommodation by ceremony, or destroy indolence by awakening effort.

Such society I had with Levet and Williams; such I had where—I am never likely to have it more.

I wish, dear lady, to you and my dear girls many a cheerful and pious Christmas. I am, your, &c.

LETTER CXXI.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, Dec. 31, 1783.

SINCE you cannot guess, I will tell you that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I return him a very thankful and respectful letter.

Your inquiry about Lady Carlisle I cannot answer, for I never saw her, unless perhaps without knowing her at a conversation.

Sir Joshua has just been here, and knows nothing of Miss Bingham; if one of Lord Lucan's daughters be meant, the eldest is now Lady Spencer; she is languishing in France with a diseased leg, and the third is a child.

Pray send the letter which you think will divert me, for I have much need of entertainment; spiritless, infirm, sleepless, and solitary, looking back with sorrow and forward with terror:—but I will stop.

Barry of Ireland had a notion that a man's pulse wore him out; my beating breast wears out me. The physicians yesterday covered it with a blister, of which the effect cannot yet be known. Good God prosper their endeavours! Heberden is of opinion, that while the weather is oppressive we must palliate.

In the mean time I am well fed; I have now in the house, pheasant, venison, turkey, and ham, all unbought. Attention and respect give pleasure, however late or however useless. But they are not useless when they are late; it is reasonable to rejoice, as the day declines, to find that it has been spent with the approbation of mankind.

The ministry is again broken, and to any man who extends his thoughts to national consideration the times are dismal and gloomy. But to a sick man what is the publick?

The new year is at hand; may God make it happy to me, to you, to us all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXXII.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam, London, Jan. 12. 1784.

IF, as you observe, my former letter was written with trepidation, there is little reason, except the habit of enduring, why this should shew more steadiness. I am confined to the house; I do not know that any thing grows better; my physicians direct me to combat the hard weather with opium; I cannot well support its turbulence, and yet cannot forbear it, for its immediate effect is ease; having kept me waking all the night, it forces sleep upon me in the day, and recompenses a night of tediousness with a day of uselessness. My legs and my thighs grow very tumid: in the mean time my appetite is good, and if my physicians do not flatter me death is rushing upon me. But this is in the hand of God.

The first talk of the sick is commonly of themselves; but if they talk of nothing else, they cannot complain if they are soon left without an audience.

You observe, Madam, that the balloon engages all mankind, and it is indeed a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge; but we have a daring projector, who disdaining the help of fumes and vapours, is making better

than Dædalean wings, with which he will master the balloon and its companions as an eagle masters a goose. It is very seriously true that a subscription of eight hundred pounds has been raised for the wire and workmanship of iron wings; one pair of which, and I think a tail, are now shewn in the Haymarket, and they are making another pair at Birmingham. The whole is said to weigh two hundred pounds—no specious preparation for flying, but there are those who expect to see him in the sky. When I can leave the house I will tell you more.

I had the same old friends to dine with me on Wednesday, and may say that since I lost sight of you I have had one pleasant day. I am, Madam, your, &c.

Pray send me a direction to Sir ——— Musgrave in Ireland.

LETTER CXXIII.

Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.

Dear Madam, London, Jan. 21, 1764.

Dr. Heberden this day favoured me with a visit; and after hearing what I had to tell him of miseries and pains, and comparing my present with my past state, declared me well. That his opinion is erroneous, I know with too much certainty; and yet was glad to hear it, as it sets extremities at a greater distance: he who is by his physician thought well, is at least not thought in immediate danger. They therefore whose attention to me makes them talk of my health will, I hope, soon not drop, but lose their subject. But, alas! I had no sleep last night, and sit now panting over my paper. *Dabit Deus his quoque finem.* I have really hope from spring; and am ready, like Almanzor, to bid the sun fly swiftly, and leave weeks and months behind him. The sun has looked for six thousand years upon the world to little purpose, if he does not know that a sick man is almost as impatient as a lover.

Mr. Cator gives such an account of Miss Cecy, as you and all of us must delight to hear. Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance; he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know. I think well of her for pleasing him, and of him for being pleased; and at the close, am delighted to find him delighted with her excellence. Let your children, dear Madam, be his care, and your pleasure; close your thoughts upon them, and when sad fancies are excluded, health and peace will return together. I am, dear Madam, your old friend.

LETTER CXXIV.

The same to the same.

Dear Madam. London, Feb. 9, 1674.

The remission of the cold did not continue long enough to afford me much relief. You are, as I perceive, afraid of the opium; I had the same terror, and admitted its assistance only under the pressure of insupportable distress, as of an auxiliary too powerful and too dangerous. But in this pinching season I cannot live without it; and the quantity which I take is less than it once was.

My physicians flatter me, that the season is a great part of my disease; and that when warm weather restores perspiration, this watery disease will evaporate. I am at least willing to flatter myself.

I have been forced to sit up many nights by an obstinate sleeplessness, which makes the time in bed intolerably tedious, and which continues my drowsiness the following day. Besides, I can sometimes sleep erect, when I cannot close my eyes in a recumbent posture. I have just bespoke a flannel dress, which I can easily slip off and on, as I go into bed, or get out of it. Thus pass my days and nights in morbid wakefulness, in unseasonable sleepiness, in gloomy solitude, with unwelcome visitors, or ungrateful exclusions, in variety of wretchedness. But I snatch every lucid interval, and animate myself with such amusements as the time offers.

One thing which I have just heard, you will think to surpass expectation. The Chaplain of the factory at Petersburg relates, that the Rambler is now, by the command of the Empress, translating into Russian; and has promised, when it is printed, to send me a copy.

Grant, O Lord, that all who shall read my pages, may become more obedient to thy laws; and when the wretched writer shall appear before thee, extend thy mercy to him, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen. I am, Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

Dr. Johnson to the Rev. Dr. Taylor, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

London, Easter-Monday,
Dear Sir, April 12, 1784.

WHAT can be the reason that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing disables you from writing. What I have seen, and what I have felt, gives me reason to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my losses I have got a friend left.

I want every comfort. My life is very solitary and very cheerless. Though it has pleased God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropsy, I am yet very weak, and have not passed the door since the 13th of December. I hope for some help from warm weather, which will surely come in time.

I could not have the consent of the physicians to go to church yesterday; I therefore receive the Holy Sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O, my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful. I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet, we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from God.

In the mean time, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living but you and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of my youth. Do not neglect, dear Sir, yours affectionately, &c.

LETTER CXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to Lord Chancellor Thurlow.

My Lord, Sept. 1784.

AFTER a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your Lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty so liberally bestowed I should gladly receive if my condition made it necessary; for to such a mind who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians, and I was very desirous that your Lordship should be told of it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better I should not be willing, if much worse, not able to migrate.

Your Lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and from your Lordship's kindness I have received a benefit which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall not live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged, most grateful, and most humble servant.

LETTER CXXVII.

Miss —— to the Rev. Dr. Horne, President of Magdalen College, Oxford.*

My dear Sir, Nov. 6.

WITH a heart almost broken with grief, I am going, I fear, to trouble you by pouring it forth. I have lost my ——, my best friend, and every thing that was most valuable to me in the world! Perhaps, ere this, the melancholy tidings have reached your ear.

On Saturday morning last, the — of ——, he yielded this soul into the hands of his Maker. O, Sir! paint to your imagination the woe and distraction that entered his house in the moment of his dissolution! Had you heard the piercing cries that were uttered! But what do I say? God forbid that your tender, your most affectionate heart should have been a witness of the scene!

* The writer of this letter was an elegant and accomplished young lady of the first distinction in Ireland, who had not completed her 17th year at the time of her father's death.

I was hardly able to bear the thoughts of surviving him; but, thank God, I am in some degree composed. I most earnestly repent of my sin, in forgetting for a moment that from His hand I received good, and why not evil when he thought fit? Pray, Sir, pardon the liberty I have taken in writing to you; but allow me to apologize in some measure, by telling you, that the day before my dearest ——— grew ill, he desired me to write. As you may remember, he owed you a letter. "Perhaps," said he smiling, "it may please the dear ——." You will, no doubt, wonder what could take him off so suddenly. It was a disorder on the brain, not water, but something occasioned by a fullness in the head. He died on the sixth day after he was seized. The day he was first affected he came down to breakfast; but, alas! he had totally lost his senses. Think what I must have felt! The physicians all agreed, and all thought till the very last, that his bodily ailments were not fatal, but that his understanding was gone for ever. Was it not a blessing then that God did not ordain him to outlive himself! I have been since thinking that I was permitted to see him in that most melancholy state to fill my heart with this subject of thankfulness.

And let me cast my thoughts on that most amazing and blessed change he has undergone, from a world of pains and vexations at best, to join that blessed spirit, my dearest ——, and make one of that angelic choir that cease not day and night to sing their hallelujahs. How this idea transports me from the world! God grant it may influence my life; that, when I come to die, it may be the death of the righteous, which is only to be attained by living their life!

Will you be so kind as to present my most affectionate respects to ——— and your ——? You will break these most dismal tidings to them; I am sure they will sympathize in my affliction,

Perhaps, were I critically to trace the source of my troubling you with this letter, self might be found to be the cause. I flatter myself that you will favour me with a line to the afflicted. What consolation must flow from your pen! And suffer me to assure you, that, next to that dear parent who is laid in the dust, I have reverenced, loved, and honoured you. If you can pardon me for thus troubling you, and should wish to hear now and then how the mourners at —— go on, how happy would it make me to let you know! but this rests in your own power. I fear you will repent of your former condescension towards me, since this is the effect of it.

My poor —— is most deeply afflicted; my happiness must *now* rest upon his good conduct, and I think he will not disappoint me: thus, as one prop is withdrawn, the heart of man fondly clings to another.

Mrs. —— is getting much better. Ever since we came home this year we have been in daily expectation of her decease. Good God! what an amazement it is to her to find herself alive, surviving her ——! She bears it like a Christian; says, she need not take her leave so soon to follow. Farewell, most honoured Sir. Believe me to remain your most dutiful, most afflicted servant.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Dr. Horne, Dean of Canterbury, to Miss ——— in answer to the above.*

My dear Madam, Canterbury, Nov. 11.

LITTLE did I think a letter from ——— would afflict my soul, but yours received this morning has indeed done it. Seeing your hand, and a black seal, my mind foreboded what had happened: I made an attempt to read it to my wife and daughters, but—it would not do—I got no further than the first sentence, burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retreat into the solitude of my study, unfit for any thing, but to think on what had happened; then to fall upon my knees, and pray, that God would evermore pour down his choicest blessings on the children of my departed friend, and as their "father and their mother had forsaken them," that HE would "take them up," and support them in time and eternity. Even so! Amen.

You ask comfort of me, but your truly excellent letter has suggested comfort to me, from all the proper topics; and I can only reflect it back to you

* His Lordship was at the time Dean of Canterbury.

again.

again. All things considered, the circumstance which first marked the disorder may be termed a *gracious* dispensation. It at once rendered the event, one may say, *desirable*, which otherwise carried so much terror and sorrow in the face of it. Nothing else in the world could so soon and so effectually have blunted the edge of the approaching calamity, and reconciled to it minds full of the tenderest love and affection. To complete the consolation that only remained, which we all know to be the fact, Mr. ——— stood always so prepared, so firm in his faith, so constant in his christian practice of every duty, that he could not be taken by surprize, or off his guard: the stroke must be to himself a blessing, whenever, or however, it came. His death was his birth day; and, like the primitive Christians, we should keep it as such, as a day of joy and triumph. Bury his body, but embalm his example, and let it diffuse his fragrance among you from generation to generation. Call him blessed, and endeavour to be like him; like him in piety, in charity, in friendship, in courteousness, in temper, in conduct, in word, and in deed. His virtues compose a little volume, which your brother should carry in his bosom; and he will need no other, if that be well studied, to make him the gentleman and the Christian. You, my dear Madam, will, I am sure, go on with diligence to finish the fair transcript you have begun, that the world around you may see, and admire.

Do not apologize for writing; but let me hear what you do, and what plan of life your brother thinks of pursuing. With kindest compliments from the sympathizing folks here, believe me, ever, my dear Madam, your faithful friend and servant.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

RECENT AND MISCELLANEOUS,

CONTINUED.

SECTION IV.

FROM THE LETTERS OF GEORGE LORD LYTTLETON, BISHOP HOADLY, AND OTHERS.

LETTER I.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton, at Hagley.

Dear Sir, London, Feb. 4, 1728.

I AM mighty glad you have made choice of so agreeable a place as Lorrain to send me to. I shall be impatient to hear that you have got a servant for me, that my stay here may be the shorter: in the mean while, you may be sure, I shall not neglect to make the best use of my time.

I am proud that the D——— approves my verses; for her judgment does great honour to those that please her. The subject is Blenheim-castle; I would have sent you a copy of them, but have not yet had time to transcribe them; you shall therefore receive them enclosed in my next letter.

The news you tell me of ——— does not a little please me; whatever does him honour in your opinion is of advantage to me, as it will render the friendship that is between us more agreeable to you; for my satisfaction in his acquaintance has been always checked, by observing you had not that esteem for him as I could wish you might have for all my friends: but I hope he will deserve it better every day, and confirm himself in my good opinion by gaining yours.

I am glad that you are pleased with my Persian Letters, and criticism upon Voltaire; but with submission to your judgment, I do not see how what I have said of Milton can destroy all poetical licence. That term indeed has been so much abused, and the liberty it allows has been pleaded in defence of such extravagant fictions, that one would almost wish there were no such words. But yet this is no reason why good authors may not raise and animate their works with flights and sallies of imagination, provided they are cautious of restraining them within the bounds of justness and propriety; for nothing can license a poet to offend against Truth and Reason, which are as much the rules of the sublime as less exalted poetry. We meet with a thousand instances of the true noblenes of thought in Milton, where the liberty you contend for is made use of, and yet nature very strictly observed. It would be endless to point out the beauties of this kind in the Paradise Lost, where the boldness of his genius appears without shocking us with the least impropriety: we are surprized, we are warmed, we are transported; but we are not hurried out of our senses, or forced to believe impossibilities. The sixth book is, I fear, in many places, an exception to this rule; the *poetica licentia* is stretched too far, and *the just* is sacrificed to *the wonderful;* (you will pardon me, if I talk too much in the language of the schools.) To set this point in a clearer light, let us compare the fiction in *los Lusiados*

Lusiados of the giant that appears to the Portuguese, and the battle of the angels in Milton. The storms, the thunders, and the lightnings, that hang about him, are proper and natural to that mountain he represents; we are pleased with seeing him thus armed, because there is nothing in the description that is not founded upon truth: but how do swords, and coats of mail, and cannons agree with angels? such a fiction can never be beautiful, because it wants probability to support it. We can easily imagine the Cape, extending its narrow arms over the sea, and guarding it from invaders; the tempests that mariners always meet with upon that coast, render such a supposition very just; but with what grounds of reason can we suppose, that the angels, to defend the throne of God, threw mountains upon the heads of the rebel army?

"Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis,
"*Numen* eget."

The liberty in one fable is restrained to nature and good sense; in the other, it is wild and unbounded, so as frequently to lose sight of both.—Pardon the freedom I have taken, to contradict your opinion and defend my own; for I shall be very ready to give it up to you, if after this you continue to think me in the wrong. It is prudent to argue with those who have such regard to our judgment as to correct it.

You ended a letter of good news very ill, in telling me that you had got the headach; I can have but very little pleasure in any thing, though it be ever so agreeable, when I know that you are ill. I am, dear Sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER II.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Luneville, July 8, 1728.

I HEARTILY congratulate you upon my sister's marriage, and wish you may dispose of all your children as much to your satisfaction and their own. Would to God Mr. P — had a fortune equal to his brother's, that he might make a present of it to my pretty little M—! but unhappily they have neither of them any portion but an uncommon share of merit, which the world will not think them much the richer for. I condole with poor Mrs. —— upon the abrupt departure of her intended husband: to be sure, she takes it much to heart; for the loss of an only lover, when a lady is past three and twenty, is as afflicting as the loss of an only child after fifty-five.

You tell me my mother desires a particular journal of my travels, and the remarks I have made upon them, after the manner of the sage Mr. Bromley. Alas! I am utterly unfit for so great a work; my genius is light and superficial, and lets slip a thousand observations which would make a figure in his book. It requires much industry and application, as well as a prodigious memory, to know how many houses there are in Paris; how many vestments in a procession; how many saints in the Romish Calendar, and how many miracles to each saint; and yet to such a pitch of exactness the curious travellers must arrive, who would imitate Mr. Bromley. Not to mention the pains he must be at in examining all the tombs in a great church, and faithfully transcribing the inscriptions, though they had no better author than the sexton or curate of the parish. For my part I was so shamefully negligent as not to set down how many crosses are in the road from Calais to Luneville; nay, I did not so much as take an inventory of the relics in the churches I went to see. You may judge by this what a poor account I shall give you of my travels, and how ill the money is bestowed that you spent upon them. But, however, if my dear mother insists upon it, I shall have so much complaisance for the curiosity natural to her sex, as to write her a particular of what rarities I have seen; but of all ordinary spectacles, such as miracles, rarée shows, and the like, I beg her permission to be silent. I am, dear Sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER III.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Luneville, July 21.

I THANK you for so kindly forgiving the piece of negligence I acquainted you of in my last. Young fellows are often guilty of voluntary forgetfulness in those affairs; but I assure you, mine was quite accidental. Mr. D—— tells you true, that I am weary of losing money at cards; but it is no less certain, that without them I shall soon be weary of Lorrain. The spirit of quadrille has

possessed the land from morning till midnight; there is nothing else in every house in town.

This court is fond of strangers, but with a proviso that strangers love quadrille. Would you win the hearts of the maids of honour, you must lose your money at quadrille; would you be thought a well bred man, you must play genteelly at quadrille; would you get a reputation of good sense, shew judgment at quadrille; however, in summer, one may contrive to pass a day without quadrille; because there are agreeable promenades, and little parties out of doors; but in the winter you are reduced to play at it, or sleep like a fly till the return of spring. Indeed in the morning the duke hunts; but my malicious stars have so contrived it, that I am no more a sportsman than a gamester. There are no men of learning in the whole country; on the contrary, it is a character they despise. A man of quality caught me the other day reading a Latin author; and asked me with an air of contempt, whether I was designed for the church. All this would be tolerable, if I was not doomed to converse with a set of English who are still more ignorant than the French; and from whom, with my utmost endeavours, I cannot be absent six hours in the day. Lord —— is the only one among them who has common sense; and he is so scandalously debauched in his principles as well as practice, that his conversation is equally shocking to my morals and my reason.

My only improvement here is in the company of the duke and prince Craon, and in the exercise of the academy: I have been absent from the last near three weeks, by reason of a sprain I got in the sinews of my leg, which is not yet quite recovered. My duty to my dear mother; I hope you and she continue well. I am, Sir, your dutiful son.

LETTER IV.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Dear Sir, Luneville, August 18.

I WROTE to you last post, and have since received yours of the 20th. Your complaints pierce my heart. Alas! Sir, what pain must it give me to think that my improvement put you to any degree of inconvenience? and perhaps, after all, I may return, and not answer your expectations. This thought gives me so much uneasiness, that I am ready to wish you would recal me, and save the charge of travelling; but, no: the world would judge perversely, and blame you for it; I must go on, and you must support me like your son.

I have observed, with extreme affliction, how much your temper is altered of late, and your cheerfulness of mind impaired. My heart has ached within me, when I have seen you giving yourself up to a melancholy diffidence, which makes you fear the worst in every thing, and seldom indulge those pleasing hopes which support and nourish us. O my dear Sir, how happy shall I be, if I am able to restore you to your former gaiety! People that knew you some years ago, say, that you was the most cheerful man alive. How much beyond the possession of any mistress will be the pleasure I shall experience, if by marrying well, I can make you such once more! this is my wish, my ambition, the prayer I make to heaven as often as I think on my future life. But, alas! I hope for it in vain, if you suffer your cares and inquietudes to destroy your health: what will avail my good intentions, if they are frustrated by your death? You will leave this world without ever knowing whether the promises of your son were the language of a grateful heart, or the lying protestations of a hypocrite: God in heaven forbid it should be so! May he preserve your health, and prolong your days, to receive a thousand proofs of the lasting love and duty of the most obliged of children! We are all bound to you, Sir, and will, I trust, repay it in love and honour of you. Let this support and comfort you, that you are the father of ten children, among whom there seems to be but one soul of love and obedience to you. This is a solid, real good, which you will feel and enjoy, when other pleasures have lost their taste: your heart will be warmed by it in old age, and you will find yourself richer in these treasures than in the possession of all you have spent upon us. I talk, Sir, from the fulness of my heart; and it is not the style of a dissembler. Do not, my dear Sir, suffer melancholy to gain too far upon you: think less of those circumstances which disquiet you, and rejoice in the many others which ought to gladden you: consider the reputation you have acquired, the glorious reputation of integrity, so uncommon

common in this age! Imagine that your posterity will look upon it as the noblest fortune you can leave them, and that your children's children will be incited to virtue by your example. I do not know, Sir, whether you feel this; I am sure I do, and glory in it. Are you not happy in my dear mother? was ever wife so virtuous, so dutiful, so fond? There is no satisfaction beyond this, and I know you have a perfect sense of it. All these advantages, well weighed, will make your misfortunes light; and I hope, the pleasure arising from them will dispel that cloud which hangs upon you, and sinks your spirits. I am, dear Sir, your dutiful son.

LETTER V.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Soissons, Nov. 20.

THIS is one of the agreeablest towns in France. The people are infinitely obliging to strangers. We are of all their parties, and perpetually share with them in their pleasures. I have learnt more French since I came here, than I should have picked up in a twelvemonth at Lorrain. The desire of a further progress and improvement in that tongue has led me into some thoughts relating to the continuation of my travels, which I beg leave to lay before you.

If you send me to Italy next spring, as you once designed to do, one great inconvenience will arise, viz. that, before I am perfect in speaking French, I must apply myself to Italian, from which it may probably come to pass, that I shall not know much of either. I should, therefore, think it more for my advantage to make the tour of France before I set out for Italy, than after I come back.

There is another reason, which at least will weigh with my dear mother; that is, that, after the month of May, when the violent heats begin, Rome (where it will be necessary to settle first, upon account of the purity of the language, which is spoke corruptly in other places; is so unwholesome as to endanger the life of any foreigner unaccustomed to that air; and therefore most travellers go thither about September, and leave it towards April. I fancy these two objections to the foregoing scheme will incline you rather to give into mine, which is as follows: suppose I stay here till after February; I may in March, April, May, and June see Orleans, Lions, and Bourdeaux; and pass July, August, and September, in the southern provinces. The air of those countries is so pure, that the greatest heats do nobody any harm. From Provence to Genoa is the shortest road I can take for Italy, and so through Tuscany to Rome, where I shall arrive about December, having seen what is curious in my way.

I may pass two months at Rome, and go from thence to Naples, the most delightful part of Italy, and the finest air; allowing me three months in that country, I may take a little voyage to Messina, and from thence to Malta, which lays just by. From Naples I may travel along the coasts of the Adriatic sea, by Ancona and Loretta, to Venice; where, if I stay but to the end of July, I shall have August, September, and October, to see Padua, Verona, Milan, and the other parts of Italy that lie N. W. of the Venetian gulph. In the winter I may settle at Sienna, where there is a good Academy, and where they are not troubled with any English. From thence I may go to Turin, if you please, and stay there till April. After which, to avoid returning through Provence a second time, I may go by Lauzanne and Berne to Franche Compté, and so by Dijon to Paris. When I am there, it will be wholly in your breast how long you would have me stay abroad, and whether I should come home the shortest way, or have the pleasure of seeing Holland. This, Sir, is the plan that I offer to you; which, I hope, you will approve of in the main, and agree to for me. I do not pretend to have laid it so exact as never to depart from it; but I am persuaded that, generally speaking, I shall find it agreeable and commodious. I have not brought Lorrain into it, because it lies quite out of the way, and because (to say the truth) I am unwilling to go thither. I know, my dear Sir, I should acquaint you with my reasons for the dislike I have expressed against that place. This is not so easy an *eclaircissement* as you may think it. Our notions of places and of persons depend upon a combination of circumstances, many of which are in themselves minute, but have weight from their assemblage with the rest. Our minds

minds are like our bodies: they owe their pain or pleasure to the good or ill assortment of a thousand causes, each of which is a trifle by itself. How small and imperceptible are the qualities in the air, or soil, or climate, where we live; and yet how sensible are the impressions they make upon us, and the delights or uneasiness they create! So it is with our minds, from the little accidents that concur to sooth or to disorder them. But in both, the impressions are more strong, as the frames which they act upon are more delicate and refined. I must therefore impute many of my complaints to the natural delicacy of my temper; and, I flatter myself, you will not think that reason the worst I could have given you. But there are others, more gross and evident, which I have already in part informed you of, and which I shall here set forth more at large.

It is natural for us to hate the school in which we take the first lessons of any art. The reason is, that the awkwardness we have shewn in such beginnings lessens us in the eyes of people there, and the disadvantageous prejudice it has given of us is never quite to be got over.

Luneville was my school of breeding, and I was there more unavoidably subject *to quelques bêtes d'ecolier*, as the *politesse* practised in that place is fuller of ceremony than elsewhere, and has a good deal peculiar to itself.

The memory of these mistakes, though lost perhaps in others, hangs upon my mind when I am there, and depresses my spirits to such a degree, that I am not like myself. One is never agreeable in company where one fears too much to be disapproved; and the very notion of being ill received, has as bad an effect upon our gaiety as the thing itself. This is the first and strongest reason why I despair of being happy in Lorrain. I have already complained of the foppish ignorance and contempt for all I have been taught to value, that is so fashionable there. You have heard me describe the greater part of the English I knew there, in colours that ought to make you fear the infection of such company for your son.

But, supposing no danger in this brutal unimproving society, it is no little grievance; for to what barbarous insults does it expose our morals and understanding! A fool, with a majority on his side, is the greatest tyrant in the world. Do not imagine, dear Sir, that I am setting up for a reformer of mankind, because I express some impatience at the folly and immorality of my acquaintance. I am far from expecting they should all be wits, much less philosophers. My own weaknesses are too well known to me, not to prejudice me in favour of other people's when they go but to a certain point. There are extravagances that have always an excuse, sometimes a grace attending them. Youth is agreeable in its sallies, and would lose its beauty if it looked too grave; but a reasonable head and an honest heart are never to be dispensed with. Not that I am so severe upon Luneville and my English friends, as to pretend there are not men of merit and good sense among them. There are some undoubtedly; but all I know are uneasy at finding themselves in such ill company. I shall trouble you no farther upon this head. If you enter into my way of thinking, what I have said will be enough: if you do not, all I can say will have no effect. I should not have engaged in this long detail, but that I love to open my heart to you, and make you the confident of all my thoughts. Till I have the honour and happiness of conversing with you in a nearer manner, indulge me, dear Sir, in this distant way of conveying my notions to you, and let me talk to you as I would to my dearest friend, without awe, correctness, or reserve. Though I have taken up so much of your time before, I cannot help giving myself the pleasure of acquainting you of the extraordinary civilities I receive from Mr. Poyntz. He has in a manner taken me into his family. I have the honour of his conversation at all hours, and he delights to turn it to my improvement. He was so good as to desire me to ask your leave to pass the winter with him, and, to encourage me to do it, promised me that I should not be without my share of public business. The first packet that comes from Fountainbleau I expect to be employed; which is no small pleasure to me, and will, I hope, be of service.

Do not you think, Sir, it would be proper for you to write to Mr. Poyntz, to thank him for the honours he has done me; and to desire him to excuse it, if his civilities make me troublesome to him longer than you designed? You know so well

well how to do those things, that I am persuaded it would have a good effect.

The only news I have to tell you, is a secret intelligence from Vienna, that count Zinzerdorff is going out of favour; this is of consequence to the negotiations, but you must not mention it: while I am not trusted with affairs you shall know all I hear; but afterwards *nil patri quidem.* I was saying to Mr. Poyntz, that Ripperda was undoubtedly very happy to come out of prison into the land of liberty; he replied, that, whatever the duke might think, he was in danger of going to prison again.

This was said some time ago, and things may have altered since. I remain, dear Sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER VI.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Dear Sir, Paris, Jan. 22, 1729.

I HAVE so much to thank you for, that I have not words to do it; so kind a compliance with all my wishes surpasses my acknowledgment. Your two letters to Mr. Poyntz had their effect, and were answered with a profusion of civilities, and marks of friendship and esteem; but the enclosed will instruct you better in the obligations I have to you and him. How happy I am in your permission to quit Lorrain, you may judge by my letter on that head. I think you have mistaken my sense in some arguments made use of there; but it is needless to set you right. Your kindness and indulgence to my desires is an argument more persuasive than all the rest, and in which only I confide.

I have lately, Sir, spent more than I could wish, and the necessity of doing it gives me no small uneasiness; but it is an undoubted fact, that without shew abroad there is no improvement. You yourself confess it, when you say, the French are only fond of strangers who have money to pay them for their compliments. You express a great uneasiness, for fear I should grow fond of games of chance. I have sometimes risqued a little at them, but without any passion or delight. Gaming is too unreasonable and dishonest for a gentleman, who has either sense or honour, to addict himself to it; but, to set you quite easy in that point, I give you my word and honour, and desire no pardon if I recede from it, that I never will addict myself to this destructive passion, which is such a whirlpool, that it absorbs all others. It is true I have been a sufferer at quadrille, and must ever suffer on: for *point de societé sans cela; c'est un article preliminaire à tout commerce avec le beau monde.* I may venture to assure you, that all thoughts of peace are not laid aside, as you apprehend. I remain, dear Sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER VII.

S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Sir, Paris, Jan. 22, 1729.

I HAVE received your two kind letters, in which you are pleased very much to over-value the small civilities it has lain in my power to show Mr. Lyttleton. I have more reason to thank you, Sir, for giving me so convincing a mark of your regard, as to interrupt the course of his travels on my account, which will lay me under a double obligation to do all I can towards making his stay agreeable and useful to him; though I shall still remain the greater gainer, by the pleasure of his company, which no services of mine can sufficiently requite. He is now in the same house with me, and by that means more constantly under my eye than even at Soissons; but I should be very unjust to him, if I left you under the imagination that his inclinations stand in the least need of any such ungenerous restraint. Depend upon it, Sir, from the observation of one who would abhor to deceive a father in so tender a point, that he retains the same virtuous and studious dispositions, which nature and your care planted in him, only strengthened and improved by age and experience; so that, I dare promise you, the bad examples of Paris, or any other place, will never have any other effect upon him, but to confirm him in the right choice he has made. Under these happy circumstances, he can have little occasion for any other advice, but that of sustaining the character he has so early got, and of supporting the hopes he has raised. I wish it were in my power to do him any part of the service you suppose me capable of. I shall not be wanting to employ him, as occasion offers; and to assist him with my advice where it may be necessary, though your cares (which he ever mentions with the greatest gratitude)

tude) have made this task very easy. He cannot fail of making you and himself happy, and of being a great ornament to our country, if, with that refined taste and delicacy of genius, he can but recal his mind, at a proper age, from the pleasures of learning, and gay scenes of imagination, to the dull road and fatigue of business. This I have sometimes taken the liberty to hint to him, though his own good judgment made it very unnecessary.

Though I have only the happiness of knowing you, Sir, by your reputation, and by this common object of our friendship and affections, your son; I beg you would be persuaded that I am, with the most particular respect, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Dear Sir, Paris, Feb. 17.

I MADE your compliments to Mr. Poyntz as handsomely as I could, and read him that part of your letter, where you leave it to his determination, how long I shall stay with him, provided it be no ways inconvenient. He assured me with the same obliging air of sincerity and goodness as you are charmed with in his letter, that it was not in the least so; and that my company again at Soissons would be the greatest relief and pleasure to him; with many other kind expressions, which you would be glad to hear, but which I cannot repeat. I have a thousand thanks to pay you, Sir, for so kindly preventing my desires, and continuing me in the possession of a happiness which I was afraid was almost at an end. The time I spend with Mr. Poyntz is certainly the most agreeable, as well as the most improving, part of my life. He is a second father to me, and it is in his society that I am least sensible of the want of yours.

I find you are uneasy at the situation the king's speech has left us in; but depend upon it, notwithstanding the little triumph that the enemies of the government may shew upon the present seeming uncertainty of affairs, they will be concluded to their confusion, and to the honour of the councils they oppose. The greatest mischief that has been done us, and which, perhaps, you are not sensible of, was full of false and malicious insinuations, which being translated and shewn to foreign ministers, unacquainted with the lenity of our constitution, and the liberty of scandal it allows, made them think that the nation would disavow the measures taken by the court, and were the principal cause of the delays and difficulties that retard the public peace. The vigorous resolutions of both houses, to support his Majesty in his councils, will, no doubt, undeceive them, and contribute very much to bring affairs to that decision we desire. Adieu, my dear Sir; and believe me to be your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER IX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Paris, March 11.

THE affair of the Gosport man of war has raised a most extravagant spirit of resentment in the French. They talk of nothing less than hanging their own officer, and seem to expect that ours should come off as ill. I have talked to his Excellency about it: he says he has had no account of it from England; but desires me to tell you, that he is in hopes the French officer has made a false report; and that, if nothing very extraordinary has been done, as the case must have happened frequently, he should think it very proper, that as many precedents as can be found should be collected and sent him over. He apprehends as much as you a popular declamation from the Craftsman on this unlucky subject. The embarkation you speak of is uncertain, (as far as I can know from him,) and intended only to reinforce our garrisons. Perhaps there may be more in it, which he does not think fit to trust me with, though I hardly imagine so; because I have such marks of his confidence, as convince me he does not doubt of my discretion.

Love to my brother ———; I dare say he will be a gainer in the end by this warm action, though it happened to be ill-timed. I am glad the young fellow has so much of the martial spirit in him. What you tell me of ——— amazes me. I shall obey your advice, in being cautious how I think any man my friend

too

too soon; since he, whose affection I was so sure of, has so injuriously convinced me of my mistake. I confess, I thought malice or ill-nature as great strangers to him as to poor ———: but what are the judgments of young men? Indeed, my dear Sir, we are very silly fellows.

I cannot help transcribing a few lines of my sister's letter of the 10th, to shew you that your goodness to your children meets at least with a grateful return:

"We should pass our time but ill, if "the good-humour of my mother did "not make us all cheerful, and make "amends for the loss of those diversions "which London would afford us. The "oftener I converse with her, the more "I love her; and every one of her ac-"tions shews me a virtue I wish to imi-"tate. This you must be sensible of as "well as I: but there is such a pleasure "in praising those we love, that I must "dwell a little upon the subject, which, "I dare say, will be as grateful to you "as it is to me. How happy are we "with such parents! When I see my fa-"ther almost spent with the cares of his "family; my dear mother confined here, "for the good of her children; I am "overpowered with gratitude and love! "May you and they continue well! and "I want nothing else to complete my "happiness."

This, Sir, is a faithful extract, and speaks the language of all our hearts. Adieu, dear Sir. I remain your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER X.

The same to the same.

Haute Fontaine, near Soissons,
Dear Sir, May 27.

I HAVE letters from my Lord ——— and his governor, in which they both express the highest sense of the friendship you have shewn them, and acknowledge the advantages they owe to it; my lord, particularly, is charmed with the good-natured service you did his relation, and speaks of it as the greatest obligation. My friend Ascough too boasts of your protection, and professes that veneration for your character, that it makes me proud of being your son. It is now my duty to return you thanks for all these favours, bestowed on others, and meant to me; and I do it with all the pleasure of a grateful mind, which finds itself honoured in the obligation. I believe, there is no young man alive, who has more happiness to boast of than myself; being blessed with a sound constitution, affectionate friends, and an easy fortune; but of all my advantages, there is none of which I have so deep a sense, as the trust and amiable harmony between the best of fathers and myself.

This is so much the dearer to me, as indeed it is the source of all the rest, and as it is not to be lost by misfortune, but dependant upon my own behaviour; and annexed to virtue, honour, and reputation, I am persuaded that no weaknesses or failings, which do not injure them, will occasion the withdrawing it from me; and therefore I consider it as secure, because I have used my mind to look upon dishonesty and shame as strangers it can never be acquainted with: such an opinion is not vanity, but it is setting those two things at a necessary distance from us; for it is certain, that the allowing a possibility of our acting wickedly, or meanly, is really making the first step towards it. I have received many civilities from Mr. Stanhope, who is here with Mr. Poyntz. Mr. Walpole has invited me to Compeigne, where I am going for two or three days. Affairs are now almost at a crisis, and there is great reason to expect they will take a happy turn. Mr. Walpole has a surprising influence over the Cardinal; so that whether peace or war ensue, we may depend upon our ally. In truth, it is the interest of the French court to be faithful to their engagements, though it may not entirely be the nation's. Emulation of trade might incline the people to wish the bond that ties them to us were broke; but the mercantile interest has at no time been much considered by this court. If you reflect upon the apprehensions of the government from the side of Spain, and their very reasonable jealousy of the Emperor, you will not wonder at their managing the friendship, and adhering to the alliance of Great Britain. The supposition, that present advantage is the basis and end of state engagements, and that they are only to be measured by that rule, is the foundation of all our suspicions against the firmness of our French ally. But the maxim is not just. Much is given to future hopes, much obtained by future fears; and security is, upon many

many occasions, sought preferably to gain. I remain, dear Sir, your dutiful son, &c.

LETTER XI.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Dear Sir, Paris, Sept. 8.

SUNDAY by four o' clock we had the good news of a Dauphin, and since that time I have thought myself in Bedlam. The natural gaiety of the nation is so improved on this occasion, that they are all stark mad with joy, and do nothing but dance and sing about the streets by hundreds and by thousands. The expressions of their joy are admirable: one fellow gives notice to the public, that he designs to draw teeth for a week together upon the Pont Neuf, *gratis*. The King is as proud of what he has done, as if he had gained a kingdom; and tells every body that he sees, *qu'il sçaura bien faire des fils tant qu'il voudra*. We are to have a fine fire work to-morrow, his Majesty being to sup in town.

The Duke of Orleans was sincerely, and without any affectation, transported at the birth of the Dauphin.

The succession was a burthen too heavy for his indolence to support, and he piously sings hallelujah for his happy delivery from it. The good old Cardinal cried for joy.

It is very late, and I have not slept these three nights for the squibs and crackers, and other noises that the people make in the streets, so must beg leave to conclude, with assuring that I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and dutiful son.

LETTER XII.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Paris, Oct. 6.

I HAVE the greatest thanks to return you for the many proofs of confidence and affection you gave me in your last, and shall labour to deserve that goodness which is so kind and complaisant to my desires. I shall, in obedience to your orders, set out for Italy to-morrow, where I hope to make such improvements as will answer the expence of the journey; but, whatever advantage or pleasure I may propose, I cannot without a sensible affliction take leave of my dear friend Mr. Poyntz, of whose favours to me I have so deep a sense, that I cannot too often express my acknowledgments. The time I have enjoyed his company has been spent so happily, and so much to my honour and advantage, that I do not know how to reconcile my thoughts to a period of it. It is not so much the liveliness of his wit, and uncommon strength of his judgment, that charm me in his conversation, as those great and noble sentiments, which would have been admired by ancient Rome, and have done honour to the most virtuous ages.

He is going to his country-seat; where I hope the air, and a little repose from the fatigue of business, will entirely restore his health. I shall observe your caution against grapes, new wine, and pretty women, though they are all very tempting, but dangerous things.

I have time for no more now, but to assure you of my duty and affection. I have written to my Lord Cobham upon my going to Italy. His Excellency thanks you for your letter, and will write to you as soon as he gets to Haute Fontaine. I have the pleasure of being able to assure you, that the final project of a treaty sent to Spain is entirely satisfactory and honourable, and that it contains a full redress and reparation for all abuses, grievances, and wrongs. I am, dear Sir, with due respect, your most dutiful son.

LETTER XIII.

S. Poyntz, Esq. to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Sir, Haute Fontaine, Oct. 18.

MR. Lyttleton will have acquainted you with my removing to this place, the day before he left Paris, for the benefit of the air, and exercise of the country, which has almost restored me to health. The first use I make of it, Sir, is to return you my sincere thanks, for making me so long happy in his good company; which I may with great truth say, has contributed more than any thing else, to make the tediousness of this splendid banishment supportable to me, and to soften the impressions which the many perverse turns of the negociations must have made upon my mind. I wish it had been in my power to make equal returns: his

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good-nature disposes him to over-value them, such as they were; but I can only hope that our future acquaintance may afford me an opportunity of discharging some part of the debt.

His behaviour has continued the same as I described it last winter; and I am morally sure will never alter, in any country, or any part of life, for the worse. His health is liable to frequent interruptions, though not dangerous ones, nor of any long continuance. They seem to proceed chiefly from an ill digestion, which, I believe, may sometimes be occasioned by the vivacity of his imagination's pursuing some agreeable thought too intensely, and diverting the spirits from their proper function, even at meals; for we have often been obliged at that time to recal him from *reveries*, that made him almost absent to his company, though without the least tincture of melancholy.

I mention this last circumstance as a peculiar felicity of his temper; melancholy and spleen being the rock on which minds of so delicate a texture as his are most in danger of splitting. I have seen two or three instances of it myself in young gentlemen of the greatest hopes; and the epistles written by Languett, to Sir Philip Sidney, upon an acquaintance, contracted like ours abroad, bring his particular case to my mind.

No young gentleman ever promised more; but, returning to England, conscious of his own worth, and full of more refined notions of honour, virtue, and friendship, than were to be met with in courts and parliaments, and in that mixed herd of men with whom business must be transacted, he conceived a total disgust for the world; and, retiring into the country, sat down with patience to consume the vigour of his imagination and youth in writing a trifling romance. I can with pleasure assure you, that I see no symptom of this kind in Mr. Lyttleton; his mind is ever cheerful and active, and full of such a benevolence towards his friends and relations in England, as well as such zeal for the honour and interests of his country, as I verily believe, will never let him sink down into indolence and inaction. However, this sickness of the mind, and an ill state of bodily health, which naturally influence and promote one the other, are the two points most necessary to guard against, in a nature the most exempt from faults I ever met with.

I ought to ask pardon for indulging this liberty, if I were not writing to the best of fathers; though this very circumstance makes all my care superfluous. But the friendship your son has expressed for me ever since his being here, and more particularly in my late illness, and at parting, is too strong upon my mind, to suffer me to suppress any hint that may be of the most distant use to him, or may convince you of the sincerity of that respect with which I am, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant.

LETTER XIV.

Lord Lyttleton to Sir Thomas Lyttleton.

Dear Sir, Jan. 17, 1747.

IT is a most sensible and painful addition to my concern and affliction for my dear wife, to hear of your being so bad with the stone; and, loaded as my heart is with my other grief, I cannot help writing this, to tell you how much I feel for you, and how ardently I pray to God to relieve you.

Last night all my thoughts were employed on you; for, when I went to bed, my poor Lucy was so much better, that we thought her in a fair way of recovery; but my uneasiness for you kept me awake great part of the night, and in the morning I found she had been much worse again, so that our alarm was as great as ever: she has since mended again, and is now pretty near as you heard last post; only that such frequent relapses give one more cause to fear that the good symptoms, which sometimes appear, will not be lasting. On the other hand, by her struggling so long, and her pulse recovering itself so well as it does, after such violent flurries, and such great sinkings, one would hope that nature is strong in her, and will be able at last to conquer her illness.

Sir Edward Hulse seems now inclined to trust to *that*, and to trouble her with no more physic; upon which condition alone she has been persuaded to take any food to-day. Upon the whole, her case is full of uncertainty, and the doctors can pronounce nothing positively about her; but they rather think it will be an affair of time. For my own health, it is yet tolerably good, though my heart has

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gone through as severe a trial as it can well sustain; more indeed than I thought it could have borne: and you may depend upon it, dear Sir, that I will make use of all the supports that religion or reason can give me, to save me from sinking under it. I know the part you take in my life and health; and I know it my duty to try not to add to your other pains that of my loss, which thought has as great an effect upon me as any thing can; and I believe God Almighty supports me above my own strength, for the sake of my friends who are concerned for me, and in return for the resignation with which I endeavour to submit to his will. If it please him, in his infinite mercy, to restore my dear wife to me, I shall most thankfully acknowledge his goodness; if not, I shall most humbly endure his chastisement, which I have too much deserved.

These are the sentiments with which my mind is replete; but, as it is still a most bitter cup, how my body will bear it, if it must not pass from me, it is impossible for me to foretel; but I hope the best. I once more pray God to relieve you from that dreadful distemper with which you are afflicted.

Gilbert West would be happy in the reputation his book has gained him, if my poor Lucy was not so ill. However, his mind leans always to hope; which is an advantage both to him and me, as it makes him a better comforter. To be sure we ought not yet to despair; but there is much to fear, and a most melancholy interval to be supported, before any certainty comes.—God send it may come well at last! I am, dear Sir, your most afflicted, but most affectionate son.

LETTER XV.

Bishop Hoadly to Mr. Balguy.*

Dear Sir, Oct. 12, 1732.

IT was a great joy to me to hear, by your last, that you enjoyed something better health than usual. And it was still a greater to be told by Mr. Pemberton, the other day, that it improves upon you. There is one part of your letter, which I esteem as a particular honour to myself; and own, am not insensible to it. I have prevented multitudes of dedications to myself; and hitherto discouraged every one that hath offered itself; but there are some persons, at least one, from whom such things cannot be disagreeable. I cannot think it a blameable vanity, even to be proud of a public mark of esteem from those who deserve the highest themselves: and something as different from being tickled by the common nauseous panegyric, as any thing can be. The worse thing I can say, supposing me at all in the wrong, is, that you have put a temptation in my way, that I have neither the power nor the will to resist. I willingly, therefore, yield myself up; and am, with my best wishes for your health, and my real desire to hear from you, dear Sir, your true friend, &c.

* Containing the Bishop's sentiments on a Dedication, prefixed to "a Collection of Tracts Moral and Theological, &c. By John Balguy, M. A. Vicar of North-Allerton, in the county of York and Prebendary at Sarum, 1734."

LETTER XVI.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon†.

Oct. 3, 1734.

——THIS subject took up so many of my thoughts, and so much of my paper, the last time I wrote, that, I fear, I seemed (perhaps affectedly) cautious in my silence upon another subject, which made a great part of the former short letter of yours. I had indeed no design, in my neglect at that time, of avoiding to give all the assurances that you yourself ever desired about Mr. Friend. If you and I continue together upon this dirty planet, you yourself shall be satisfied of the truth of what I have said to you: and I say this the rather, because if you are not satisfied in what I do, I am very sure I shall not be so myself. You have done more in two or three words, when you tell me, *You shall esteem it as done to yourself*, to move and engage me, (if I had not been already engaged to it,) than all the oratory of all others could have done. And if that case should happen, which you once put, but which my heart will not suffer me to repeat; friendship and honour shall most certainly act a part, which, if your spirit could then look

† On the same occasion.

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down and see, it would say—*This is exactly as it would have been, had I been still there.*—If you think there is any thing *more* for me to say upon this, let me know it and I will say it.

Dr. Allured Clarke will be happy at Sundon in a few days, and will bring down with him a piece to read to you, in which I am too much concerned. It is a Dedication of some excellent Tracts to the Bishop of Winchester. I remember in Don Quixote a saying—"Though I know this man to be a coxcomb, yet how sweet is flattery even from him!"—What must I say, when it comes from a man of great uncommon sense, who believes every word of it to be true? You know me better than that author; perhaps as much of my weakness as any one in the world. The only favour I beg of you is, when you read it, or hear it, forget that you know me; or, if you cannot do that, (as I rather hope you cannot,) forget my weaknesses—forget the imperfections you have been witness to—and be as indulgent as you can, in joining with that pretty writer in his mistakes—mistakes, which will animate me to turn them into truths. I thank you for your concern for my health in my hurry. I am quite ashamed of myself. My spirits are sunk; I know not what the joy of sleep is. All will be over in a few days; and by that time you are in town, I shall wonder at my weakness, and be quite easy, and your humble, faithful servant.

LETTER XVII.

The same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 10, 1715.

I HAVE now finished, to the best of my power, amidst a great many uneasinesses, every thing that was laid upon me.

I hope you will be so good, as to let me shew you the whole of what I have now done, before *another person* sees it. And with this view, (unless I meet any message at my house at Broad-street to the contrary,) I shall do myself the pleasure to wait upon you on Friday morning.

If I ever forget my obligations to yourself, or to Mr. Clayton; and particularly, if I ever forget the fortnight at Organ-Hall; which I protest to you, I think, was the most perfect, and most agreeable composition of good sense, good manners, and freedom of conversation, that I ever so much as hoped to meet with in this world; may you forget that there is such a place as Streatham, or a person, as your most obliged and most obedient servant.

LETTER XVIII.

The same to the same.

Madam, Sept. 27, 1715.

DR. Clarke told me of your kind design that the Princess should see this letter. You go on to favour me in the most obliging manner. How few are there in the world, who would take the part upon them, of interesting themselves for a man not in fashion! But indeed, how few are there like you! Not one, if you will give me leave to say so, all things considered, as far as I know the world. It is far from a compliment to tell you, that I never had any honour paid to me in my life, of which I have had a sense so grateful to myself, as of the regard and approbation you have been so good as to afford me. I have no such words as I wish for, to express to you what I think: and, I hope, you see enough in me already, to believe me, when I assure you I will not say any thing to you that I do not think. I desire very much to hear of your perfect recovery; and am, with the sincerest gratitude, Madam, your most obedient servant.

LETTER XIX.

(The latter end.)

The same to the same.

Madam, Aug. 23, 1716.

I DO not follow great precedents, and write on the outside, or in the front, *To the much esteemed, To the much respected, To the highly-honoured Mrs. Clayton**; but it is writ within, in lasting characters.—Your own virtues have writ it.—Your other accomplishments are great and uncommon; but it is your sincerity and goodness which make the deepest impression: which manage the others, and give them their agreeableness; and it is to these that I in particular owe the pleasure I have in subscribing myself your faithful friend, your most obliged, and obedient servant.

\+ Lady Sundon was better known by the name of Mrs. Clayton, bed chamber woman, and friend, of the late Queen Caroline.

LETTER XX.

(The first part.)

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Madam, Sept. 4, 1716.

You oblige your friends in the most agreeable manner in the world. You take a part in what is of concern to their interest, in such a manner, and with such a grace, as can never be forgotten. One doth not know which to value most, the head or the heart; but this is the satisfaction, that they are inseparable, and both together invaluable. I take this first minute I can, to thank you for the quickness, the beauty, the warmth, and partiality, of your last. If I am proud in the latter part of my life, yourself and another * must chiefly answer for it. Now I have mentioned warmth, you must give me leave to mention one uncommon, and hardly ever to be met with, mixture in the character of the lady I spake of in my first letter. And that is the *passion* which is often seen to accompany sincerity, inseparably joined with the prudence which is very seldom, in any tolerable degree, found with it. Without that warmth, which I have ventured to call passion, the best-meaning person in the world hath but little heart to press forward, even in what he knows to be right; and without this prudence, that warmth becomes passion in the common sense of the word; and pusheth him on to ruin his own designs. You must have seen many instances of this in life, in which a natural boldness and an imprudent warmth have been equally pernicious to the best designs. The happy peculiarity is, I sincerely think, in her I have mentioned, the warmth of an honest heart, uncapable of any but good and noble views, under the conduct of such a prudence and knowledge of the world as guards it safely from overturning them. I protest to you, I am not sensible in this, or any thing else I have said, of any partiality; unless that can be called partiality, which is a judgment founded upon observation and experience. I confess, I often promise to myself great things, (I mean great things for the public) from the influences of such a combination of good qualities as never, I believe, met at court, till you carried them thither; if uncertain life, uncertain health, and uncertain favour, will give leave. But why should we doubt of favour, where there is so much reason and real profit in the continuance of it, and so much good sense to discern that reason and advantage? I wish we could be as sure of the other two. But I go to other subjects.

* The Princess of Wales, Caroline.

LETTER XXI.

(The latter part.)

The same to the same.

Salisbury, June 8, 1725.

You have often and voluntarily done me the most engaging offices of friendship of this sort: and I will say no more now, but one word of truth in the sincerity of my heart. Your good understanding, your established love to virtue and integrity, your true sense of honour, your knowledge of the world without being the worse for it, your conversing in it with all the good manners, and none of the faults of its admirers, your entering into all its innocent fashions, and abhorring all its vices; such accomplishments have, I own, a force upon me, to make me think it worth my while to engage and preserve a friendship of such a sort. They have long had this force upon me; and time and experience have not lessened, but increased it. I will therefore write myself, with the greatest (that is, the truest) respect, Madam, your most faithful friend, and humble servant.

LETTER XXII.

The same to the same.

(With a pot of char.)

Jan. 26, 1726-7.

——And whenever it comes to your table, let it put you in mind of him who sends it. And, believe me, he does not wish to be remembered under a character more favourable, or more honourable to himself, than that of one, who knows how to value, in an uncommon manner, virtue and good sense united in an uncommon degree? or, in other words, that of Mrs. Clayton's faithful friend and humble servant.

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LETTER XXIII.

The same to the same.

Jan. 3, 1727-8.

—IT is a long time since I had the pleasure of a conversation, which I cannot part with without some struggles. I consider indeed, that the hours in which I used to enjoy it, are those which are now generally better and more usefully employed, on your part, in another manner; and, I think, you cannot be too often at court, because no harm can, but a great deal of good, I am confident, will come from it. I am willing therefore to suffer some mortification, but not a perpetual one. I am a little too selfish, to give up all; and hope I may still have some part in a gratification which I pursued, you know, long before the present situation of affairs; and which, give me leave to say, I still pursue for the sake of your merit; the merit, I mean, of virtue and good sense. I like you not one thought the better for your power at court; though, I own, I like the court itself the better for it. Nor do I court your friendship at all the more for that. I cannot but flatter myself, I have still some little claim to it, from my own constant and uniform regard to you, ever since I knew you, which I would call merit in myself, could I have acted otherwise. But I have a greater claim to it. I have your own promise, given me many years ago: and I can never give up this claim, unless I appear to have done any thing to forfeit it. I have letters written from Bath in 1716, which have just now give me a fresh pleasure in reading them; and I keep them as the writings of my estate in you, which very much confirm my title to your friendship.

LETTER XXIV.

The same to the same.

Madam, Salisbury, Aug. 3, 1730.

IT would be a very great pleasure to me to hear you are well, in whatever part of our world you now are. I left you at Windsor, where I sent to inquire after your health, but could not possibly stay to wait on you myself. I had the pleasure just to see you going into the chapel. If you saw me there, you saw me tired to death with a ceremony more insignificantly troublesome, and more ridiculous, than ever I expected. I fled from the last part of it in the hall, and went a good way towards Salisbury that evening, regretting nothing but that I could not first have a little of your conversation.

I believe, Madam, when you with so much warmth pressed me to write an account of Dr. Clarke, you little thought that would be made the occasion of so much reproach and bitterness, as Mr. Whiston has vented against me; and much less that Mr. Jackson, so much obliged as he was to that great man, could, so soon after his death, make use of his name to hurt me; by sending to Mr. Whiston, in order to be published, an idle, imperfect, partial, and false account of what, he was told, passed between Dr. Clarke and me, upon the subject of a Prebend of Salisbury, which, it seems, he expected from me. I never saw such an instance of pious tittle-tattle from one end to the other; nor so much of the spirit of censure, and religious pride, and immoral zeal. What I see in them both confirms me in what I have used to observe, that pious, devout, and (as they are called) godly, and (I will own) well-meaning men, often do the very same things which wicked men do, and which are in them allowed to be wicked and inexcusable. How they should be excusable or praise-worthy in others; or why Mr. Whiston should think it pardonable in himself to vent (nay, in truth, to *invent*,) what it would be unpardonable in a less pious man to say of me; I am at a loss to know. I leave him to one who knows better than we do what allowances to make for such fury of religion, and desire to be guarded myself from it for ever. As I began, so I end. I entreat you, let me hear from you, if it be but in two lines, where you are, and how your health is; and believe me, wherever I am, to be, with the truest honour and highest esteem, Madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER XXV.

The same to the same.

Madam, Salisbury, August 14, 1731.

IT was a very sensible satisfaction to me to have it under your own hand, that your health was the better for the ease

and quiet of Sundon: and that it would not be disagreeable to you to be interrupted now and then with a line or two from hence. I ought indeed to have made this acknowledgment much sooner; and have little to say for myself, but that for some time I have every day expected to see or hear from Dr. Clarke, (according to his promise when he set out for Sundon,) and to have an answer from him to twenty questions I had to ask about you, and your health, and the place, and I know not what. A poor excuse, I own: but such as it is, joining itself with the very hot weather, (which made my head unfit for a letter to you, and my hand itself unable to do as it used to do,) it prevailed until I saw him. He is but just gone, after a stay of only a day and a half: and he has left me full of pleasing thoughts about Sundon; and the Lady of Sundon; and full of wishes to see her in her country-retirement, which, I know, she adorns. And if wish and imagination can bring it about, I am now there with you. Let me indulge the imagination: it will please me, and not hurt you. Methinks, I very plainly see you receiving your friends, with a countenance as free from a cloud, as your heart is from a spot, (much the more to be valued by those whom you think worthy of it, because in you it is so very different from what I call the countenance of common civility, due to the undistinguished rabble of acquaintance:) I mean, a countenance that shews the friendship of the heart; not indeed to be described, nor so much as perceived by any, but the few that feel within themselves something, which tells them what it means in another. From this image, which I can hardly part with, I go on to others. The neatness of the house; the cleanness of the little circle of ground about it; the elegance of your entertainments—I see them with pleasure, because they are not alone, but are the garniture of much greater things; and in you shew a mind capable of descending, with the utmost propriety, to the lower parts of life, without ever losing sight of the highest. The imagery now goes on, and represents to me the manner of conversation with your friends, made agreeable by a quickness (not to say, eagerness) of spirit, guarded by the goodness of the understanding. The remembrance of what I myself have been witness to, makes the idea of this very strong. Sundon can add even to this the circumstance of more quiet, and less interruption from those rappings at the gate which I have often been angry at, at London; a circumstance, I own, to me, of a most disagreeable sort.

Salisbury, Aug. 17, 1731.

Thus far I had writ last post-day, and was going on to follow you to the cottages and wants of your poor neighbours, and to partake with you in the pleasure of beneficence, by seeing the satisfaction and joy of a good mind, in being able to take any thing from the pains and miseries of the distressed part of mankind: but I was interrupted by something (not worth mentioning) which made it absolutely impossible to add a line or two for a conclusion before the post went away, at least I was dispirited enough to think so. I know no higher joy than that of doing good; nor can I frame to myself any more agreeable image, when I am thinking of Sundon, than that of one, who knows the art of living herself, and has the goodness to help all around her to enjoy life, as far as her ability can reach. I can add nothing greater than this; and therefore with this I will end the scene I was unwilling to dress out for myself; to make Sundon as pleasant to me as I could, at this distance, and to entertain myself with what I might enjoy, if I were there. It is the only revenge we can take of absence, to feign an imaginary presence. It is some amends, though a little uneasy, when we awake and find it was a dream. Be it so: I am sure there is a foundation for it all; from what I myself have seen, and heard, and experienced; and that no part of the picture flatters the original.

But now I bid Sundon adieu; and wish I had any thing to add, that could be entertaining to you. I desire but two lines, (I mean, if you have not time for more,) to know where you are, and how you are; nor do I design to stay for them before I write again. The cool weather has restored a little life to me. In the very hot, which we lately had, I felt to myself like a man dragging life, like a chain, after him; not enjoying it, but toiling for it. The worse for me, because I am not here in a retirement, to dispose of myself as I please; but open

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to all business, and to all comers every day equally. It is my duty to be so: and I submit to it with some satisfaction, because it seems agreeable to all, and useful to some, about Salisbury.—My wife is as much your humble servant and Mr. Clayton's, as it is possible to be; and so am I. Preserve your health, and believe me to be, with the most particular regard, Madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER XXVI.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Madam,

I CANNOT forbear bidding you farewell, before I leave the town. You will pardon me. You can hardly imagine how foolish, or how sick, or how weak, I have been to-day, even with the thoughts of to-morrow. You used to ask, how much of my head I would part with for a stronger heart. If you had been to feel what my *head* has been to-day, you would have wished for my heart, weak as it is, instead of it. And yet, if you had known how it has been with my *heart* alone, you would have taken my painful head instead of it. My hand (with a pen in it) is as weak as either of them, as you may see. Why am I so different from what others are, and from what perhaps I ought to be myself? I know that I am going, but for a very little while, and upon no uncommon occasion. And yet, because I am parting from every thing that is particularly dear to me within my own family, and without it, though but for a while, I feel it to that excess of sinking, that I care not to attempt to express it, for fear you should think more meanly of me, than even my foolish conversation on Monday made you. Believe me sincere, and hearty in that sense; open; free, where freedom is safe, and where virtue makes it so—Believe me this—and think me in other respects as of a weak man, if you please. If I can think myself qualified for the best friendship, I shall have great ease even in a dejected condition. Dejected as it is, I cannot forbear telling you, that I had a thorough, spirituous, satyrical, and resenting conversation with Mr. W. yesterday—all ending with great thanks for my freedom, and great professions.—I am interrupted in my poor scrawl. May the dearest friend I have in the world be preserved in health, and every thing that she is capable of wishing: and may I (selfish you see at last) see her once more in such a state! Forgive my hasty and uneasy scribbling, and do not forget, Madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

LETTER XXVII.

The same to the same.

Madam,

DR. Sykes begs that you will please to accept one of the two books which accompany this letter; and that you will do him the honour, at your own leisure and the most convenient time, to give or send the other to her Majesty. I promised him to join with him in the request, and to convey them to you. The book is worthy of any learned and judicious man; and I dare say, without learning, you will see enough in it to render it agreeable to you, who have too good and reasonable a mind, to desire that Christianity should be content with the support of falsehood and absurdity, either in fact, or in reasoning.

My dearest friend, if I am not willing, I may say, if I am not made, to partake of all your griefs, and sympathize in all your sorrows; I neither desire nor deserve to have any part in the joys and satisfactions of such a friendship. When I last left you, I left you in a cloud of distress. The pain of mind which, I saw, it gave you, grieved me; but the humanity and tenderness which so often discovered itself and could not be hid, did not displease me. Such a feeling of the miseries of others, and such a solicitude to redress them, can never be in bad and mean souls. They are to me the most beautiful and most charming appearances. I was exceedingly touched: and cannot forbear to inquire how you do now; and to send you the best, the constant wishes of my soul. I am, with all truth and zeal, Madam, your most faithful, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

(The first part.)

The same to the same.

Madam, Salisbury, Sept. 28, 1731.

I CAN hardly tell you how much I am obliged to you for your last favour om Sundon. This I can say for my-

self, that what I write to you proceeds from the heart of a friend, and from an heart desirous and ambitious that a conversation so agreeable to itself should not be disagreeable to you. I take a real pleasure in conversing with you, at this distance, since this distance must sometimes be; and the pleasure is now as high as it can be, since you give me leave to think that I do not take it at your expence; but that you bear the part of a friend in it. If you had searched the world of words, you could not have found out an expression so perfectly adapted to my wishes as that, in which you bid me *judge from my own heart*, &c. I do so: and I desire no more, but the continuance of the happiness of such a friend; the greatest addition to the other blessings of this poor life, and the greatest support under the evils of it. Indeed I feel the truth of all that you say upon this subject; and feel it, as you plainly do, without envying the insensibility and indifference of some you speak of, and much less their falsehood and insincerity: though the former, I grant, guard them against the many pains of a sensible heart; and the latter, (as they think,) are the great instruments of political wisdom; that is, of their art of living in the world. I am sorry I must call it *living*. Nothing but happiness ought to be called *life;* and nothing but the generous virtues can create and secure a true happiness; even in that low and mixed condition in which we must accept of it in this world, it is highly worth our while to seek it in their paths; and they certainly will lead us to its heights, in the state of unmixed and unpolluted good, which we hope for. Go on therefore; and I will follow, if I can, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

I HOPE, Madam, you have before this received my last letter, and forgiven the length of it, as well as every expression in it. When I write to you, I always think I am writing to a person of excellent understanding, who can temper the meaning of an expression, or word; and not think me so weak as to intend flattery, in what, I own, would sound a little extravagant were it said to most others. When I use the highest expressions of you, I know, you cannot think I mean to place you out of the rank of mankind, or to exempt you from the frailties and passions inseparable, in some instances or other, from our nature. I compare you in my thoughts with others of the same kind; and I see, with pleasure, so great a superiority to the many, that I think, I can hardly express my sense of it strong enough. Compared with them, therefore, I may justly speak of you as one of a superior species; and you will supply the comparison, if I do not always express it; and not think me capable of offering incense, which I know, you are not capable of receiving. In a word, I would be understood, in all such cases, as expressing the pleasure of a friend, and the sense he has of his happiness in the friendship of one, whose understanding and whose heart are both so free from those uncomfortable imperfections, which very many labour under, even of those who pass through the world with some character and reputation.

I left myself no time, when I last wrote, to say any thing but upon one subject: and I think I am now running on, as if it would be so again. But I stop my pen, for once, in that course. I was not a little concerned to see the war from the press at last break out into an excess.—But then, on the other side, what can be proposed by the Administration from the prosecution of printers and publishers, now again, after so many disappointments, set on foot? I defy them to name any one instance (excepting the case of high treason) in which a prosecution of this sort did not end to the prejudice of the Administration, even where they succeeded in the sentence for punishment; much less, where they perhaps can never succeed, but must go on still to be disappointed as they have been already. I wish they would consider this experience, instead of consulting their present anger. I am sure, I could presently name them twenty instances of the truth of what I now say, and, what I have often said to them and theirs, heretofore. One advantage plainly comes to the clergy from these late political controversies, that the laity will never again be able to reproach them as the only masters of scandal and ill language in controversy. For certainly the lay gentlemen have at last outdone them by many degrees; I

hope,

hope, indeed, enough to make the clergy themselves forsake their bitter style, and their bad manners, upon such occasions; now they see how shocking and indecent these are even in those who do not profess so much regard for religion as they do. There may be a sort of pleasure in reading the keenness and wit of a writer, and yet it cannot make amends either for the littlenesses to which he descends, or the enormities he rises to in his wrath.—

LETTER XXX.

The same to the same.

July 18, 1732. Grosvenor-street.

—Do not wonder that I interrupt you so soon, to beg you to let me know how you do. I cannot yet arrive at the perfection of weighing things which demand no such exactness, by grains and scruples; nor of being happy in an easy, philosophical indifference—or in the temper at all like it. But when I am convinced that it is more agreeable to my friend, that I should be so, I know, and I am sure, I can by degrees thoroughly effect it. In the mean while, let me act, and speak, agreeably to my present notions of friendship. I never had a thought but that you were the truest and heartiest friend in the world. I no more doubt of your zeal to do substantial good offices to your friends, and to those who may outlive them; than I doubt of my own being alive. I think and know it to be great and uncommon; and I should be a most absurd creature, if I did not think *these* the very essence of true friendship. But, I think, there are circumstances, which, though of no importance without the other substantial part, yet make *that* itself, and the thought of it, more agreeable; vastly more agreeable than it would otherwise be. And where virtue and honour in the highest degree, and *these* all unite; here, I think, the agreeableness of friendship is in perfection, and above all other agreeablenesses in this world.

LETTER XXXI.

The same to the same.

Sept. 11, 1731.

—You see the temper of your friend. If you do not like it, tell him so quickly; and teach him (if you can) to be a friend, in the peculiar sense of that word, without it. Shew him how it is possible to have the pleasure of such a friendship, without the pain. For in this case, let all the world say what they will, the pain of care, and fear, and (what is worst of all) loss, must be proportionable to the pleasure of the present good. The indifferent, who value all persons equally, know nothing, I acknowledge, of this uneasiness; but then, they know nothing of the happiness neither. I will not determine the question, between the two tempers, for any but myself. I am content with what I feel; and could never prevail with myself to exchange joy and sorrow for a state of constant tasteless indifference. I now come back to your letter. The lady of Sundon may perhaps know, or fancy she knows, her own imperfections; but is not so well acquainted with her own perfections, I believe, as some others may be. I said nothing to her, or of her, from any partiality of friendship; nor was I afraid of any judgment but her own, to condemn any thing I said. My desire was only, that she would not think I intended flattery; which is unworthy of me to give, or of her to receive. My language upon this subject is the same in conversation with others, as it is with yourself; which I think a very good argument to appeal to: and if I should be so unhappy as to outlive one of my greatest happinesses, my sentiments would break forth, and be known to many, more than they can be now. The Bishop, who lives at Salisbury, thinks it as great an honour that you express your kind opinion of him, and his manner of living, in one short sentence, as if you had done it with a much greater length of words.

LETTER XXXII.

The same to the same.

Madam, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 1731.

I GIVE you this trouble merely because I promised Dr. Herring yesterday I would do so. It is only to let you know that Dr. Claggett is now fixed for Bishop of St. David's; and is to resign his deanery of Rochester, having other things to hold with it. The deanery is about 400l. a year, and at a very convenient distance; and though much worse than what was thought of for our friend. I

perceive would be very acceptable. He only mentioned the thing, but did not at all press: only wished that you knew it, because he is sure, (from what I have said to him, and your own kind expressions to him,) that, if a proper occasion should offer, you would bring his name into discourse; or, if not, he should be perfectly easy. My notion is, that the person will push for it, for whose sake the Queen was moved from her first kind intention for Dr. H. and that since her Majesty did first think of Dr. H. it would be a well-looking and honourable compensation for that disappointment, to give Dr. H a public mark of her favour, before the other is put another step before him. But I leave it with one who knows much better than I do what steps are proper to be taken. Perhaps the very mention of his name now may make the other and better thing a little more secure in time to come, by occasioning some stronger expressions about it. And this will be some good, and therefore will be some pleasure to a generous mind. —Adieu. Preserve your health, and suffer me to have the pleasure of thinking it agreeable to you, that I am, and that I tell you I am, Madam, your most faithful friend and servant.

I am not half so solicitous about audiences at St. James's, as I am about frequent ones in Cleveland-court.

LETTER XXXIII.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

Madam, Jan. 1, 1731-2.

In the language of the season, I wish you and Mr. Clayton many happy years; and I do it with the sincerest warmth of a friendly heart. To wish years of life without happiness, is a cruel wish. If this (which we now enter) goes on with me, as it has begun, I am afraid I shall think one more too many. That head which felt to its owner so heavy on Thursday evening, was much worse than heavy all that night and yesterday. My cold increased, and settled in one side of my head. I have felt more pain and misery since, than through many years before. I am easier this morning; but still in pain: and were it not for that, should feel to myself like one, whom Steele used to describe with half his head cut off. One meaning of all this is, that my not attending the duty of this day at court, may not be imputed to want of heart, but to want of head; or rather to having too much head. The very conversing with you by letter has made me feel it less than I did; and, if I should follow my inclination, I could, as bad as I am, go on to write more than it is fit to trouble you with, such a busy day as this. Take all possible care to go home well and I will take all I can to be well enough to wait upon you the first minute you will permit me to finish the tale I was interrupted in on Thurday night; and to enjoy a conversation every day more and more highly valued by, Madam, your most faithful and obliged servant.

LETTER XXXIV.

The same to the same.

The Bishop having with humour described his hearing Dr. Delany preach, at the King's Chapel, goes on thus—

—I heartily wish that both he, and his brother Berkley, (who is truly the title of his own book,) would keep their *minute philosophy* to themselves; or at least, would let religion alone, and not blend them into one inconsistent lump. They both seem to me to be well qualified to dress out a romance. Dean B. particularly, has beautiful imagery, and fine expression, and fruitful invention. But as to the native simplicity of religion, they are made to hurt it; and if they cannot be said to *corrupt it*, it is only because it is corrupted already to their hands. They do all they can to keep on the corruption; and I own, I think Alciphron the most plain attempt to bring obscurity and darkness into all science as well as to make nonsense essential to religion, that this last age has produced. And I know very well that it was from such books, formed upon such principles exactly, that Dr. Clarke used to dread and foretell the total subversion of all knowledge as well as of all religion;—of all that Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Locke, he, himself, and many others, had been endeavouring to bring into some reputation. I cannot indeed say that the veil is well made, or well spread. I think it may very easily be taken off, and the absurdities placed in a glaring light: as I have heard acknowledged in many instances

stances by the greatest admirers of those dialogues. I would not have you think that I put the two upon an equal foot. But when I see even the best of the two flattered and caressed for those very wounds he has given to all that is most worthy of the study or regard of reasonable creatures, I cannot help making an ejaculation—To what purpose are all endeavours to make knowledge and religion plain and amiable—when a few pretty words, either without a meaning, or with a very bad one, shall, like a charm, dissolve and tear to pieces all the labours of the Great!—

And a certain Lord, who knew the world of books and men as well as any body, thus expresses himself to the Bishop:

When I began this letter, I intended to write to you about nothing but Dean Berkley's book; but have just found out that I have not said one word about it. I have been in the clouds with him these three last days; and think his reasoning very often literally like being there; it is something very exalted and very unsubstantial; a sort of sublime fog, that looks bright, and makes one giddy. As to his Essay upon Vision, I suppose it is, from my want of apprehension, and not his want of perspicuity—but I positively understand it no more than if it were in Syriac. Pray tell me, if any one who was not prejudiced against him would not say, there was wit, spirit, and learning in the book: and any body who was not partial for him, would not allow that there was a great deal of sophistry, obscurity, and unfairness.

LETTER XXXV.

Bishop Hoadly to Lady Sundon.

My dearest Friend, April 17, 1732.

If this finds you once more escaped well from the fatigue and disorder of a court waiting, it will be a great joy to me, and I have some hope it will, because I had the pleasure to know from your servant (as I came from the chapel yesterday evening) that at least you were not ill.—The *chain of life* (of which we have sometimes spoke) has been very heavy ever since I saw you; and my heart is now a good deal wounded with the news of Sir William Willys's death. He had very good sense, great modesty, uncommon humanity, and a beneficence which shewed itself in a way, that but a few know any thing of. (Let me go on, and pour out a little of my sorrow, though my paper almost forbids me, and I did not design it when I sat down to write.) He had learning enough to make him acceptable to those who had had opportunities of gaining more. But it was covered by the ease and unaffected behaviour of the gentleman. Indeed, he had more excellences than most of his rank take pains to shew, or to pretend to. But that which touched me most, his heart was good; and he loved me. He loved me, I have reason to say it, in so particular a manner, that he either could not, or would not, hide it. And he had that sort of tenderness in shewing it, which, when I know it to be real, always captivates my heart. The last time I saw him, (which I little thought would have been the last,) after some of the most engaging discourse in his easy way, he promised himself he said, to come much oftener to me than he used to do, since I had assured him how agreeable an interruption it would always be to me. He was ever contriving how to get his friends about him in the most agreeable manner: and when they were so, they were sure of being easy and happy. I say what I think literally true, when I say that no one could be uneasy with him. Nor do I believe that ever any one was. And though his numerous relations (some not in affluence) will get a great deal by his death, I believe there is hardly one of them who would not gladly purchase his presence again with all that they can get by losing him. As to myself, I do not say that he was to me in that rank of friendship in which one other person is. No one ever was: no one, I think, ever can be. But if I had been asked, whom of all my friends, next to that one, I would have chosen to have stayed longest with me in this miserable planet, I believe, from the knowledge I had of him from his childhood, I should have said, Sir William Willys. But he is suddenly gone, and in a most painful manner. Forgive this from your faithful, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

Bishop Hoadley to Lady Sundon.

—NOISE, crowds, ringing of bells, great dinners, strange lodgings, company without conversation, and the like, have not made me either more in love with myself, or my situation in the world, than I was before. But they have still more recommended to me the private part of my life; the sweets of quietness, and the enjoyment of true friendship.—I think often, and most agreeably, of the happiness, the great happiness, of having a friend in whose good heart one may confide with the utmost security; and in whose good understanding one may be sure of the best advice, as well as entertainment. That there is such a person in the world, I am certain from my own knowledge. And I would now ask no greater favour of Providence, than to make me as certain of the friendship of this person. I should esteem it a peculiar happiness in the decline of life; a support under the evils that generally attend it: and all the compensation for living on, which a reasonable mind could well wish for, after the concerns of our nearest relations are tolerably taken care of. You know best whether Providence has been so indulgent to me as to grant me this good; and you know what my notion of friendship is. Without the strictest virtue and honour, there is no foundation for it; nor can it, without them, be friendship; or any thing higher than company keeping, for low or ignominious purposes. If a benificent temper and a readiness for good offices be added, these also are qualifications without which it cannot subsist. But what I understand by it is still something more; a sort of peculiar sympathy, which it is hard to define so as to be understood, if it be not felt; and if it be, it needs no definition. This latter added to the former is what completes the notion of what I mean by the *word* friendship, and what I wish for in the *thing*, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

The same to the same.

Madam, Nov. 6, 1732.

I WILL make no apology for troubling you with this. I was desired by a friend in the city to get it put into the Queen's hands, as the most likely way of its having effect. You will see it is a most deplorable case to the father and mother; and though I fear little good can be done in it, yet it is our duty to do what we can.—Her Majesty will, I am confident, be pleased with being the instrument of good in so melancholy an affair as this is; if any good can be done. The misery of the family at present is unexpressible.

If I am in the wrong in desiring you to give this to her Majesty, I beg you to pardon it, and to send it me again. It was thought that if it came to his Majesty with her charitable intercession, it would be of much more consequence, than in any other way.

As to myself, I always desire that her Majesty may think and see, I had rather speak by you, and hear by you, than by any person living. I account this an honour to myself. If you can but think it no dishonour to you, it is all I ought to pretend to. I am, with a true never-interrupted respect and friendship, Madam, your most faithful, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The same to the same.

Madam, Sept. 13, 1734.

I CAME home from you yesterday without spirits, without heart, and without appetite. I am touched in the tenderest point, that of honour and strict regard to obligations. The great pain is, that you seem to differ from me. In such cases of morality (for so I account this) I take you to be so good a judge, that I can easily suspect my own judgment if you persist in that difference; though still my *own*, even mistaken judgment, must guide me. I know of no way of shewing my compliance but one, without giving myself a wound which all the balm in the world will never be able to cure. If I yield, it shall be to you; and there is no way of yielding (should the case in view happen) but by giving up my own son,—&c.—

LETTER XXXIX.

The same to the same.

Madam, Sept. 24, 1734.

I SHOULD not have omitted one post to acknowledge my obligation to you for the cordial of your last letter, if the hurry

hurry in which I have some days lived had not made it literally impossible to have writ my sense of it, as I ought. I dare say you felt some uneasiness for me; and partook a little of the pain which the weakness of my head, or my heart, had brought upon me. Your goodness induced you to write what has had all the good effect, which that itself could wish. I must own to you, I must ever think myself obliged to explain to you what I should have little concern to do to another; because I value your friendship and your judgment too much to be at all easy without doing it, There is no doubt, as you say, that my own conscience must be my guide, and a guide not to be forsaken in deference to any person. But I am confident you could not be displeased at my earnest wish, that you should think as I did, in a point of moral obligation; or, if not, at my trying to find an honourable expedient for the doing what you seemed so desirous of. And, believe me, I have such a delicacy in the matter of promises, that I can sooner make free with my own son, than with a friend to whom I had bound myself. I will trouble you no more upon this subject, except, &c.

LETTER XL.

The same to the same.

Monday, May 26, 1735.

PERMIT me, Madam, by this paper, to congratulate your Ladyship upon the honour his Majesty has been pleased to do my Lord Sundon and yourself. I think the merits of you both towards the Royal Family are as great, as well can be. I wish your Ladyship every thing that you deserve. I can wish you no more. If I could, I am prevented now from saying it; and have only time to beg that you will not go out of town without suffering me to wait upon you at any hour of any day most convenient to yourself. I am with the same high and singular esteem, Madam, your Ladyship's most faithful humble servant.

LETTER XLI.

Lord Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq. at the Hague.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, Jan. 26, O. S. 1748.

THIS letter goes to you, in that confidence, which I always shall, and know that I safely may, place in you: and you will therefore not let one word of it transpire.

What * * * wrote to * * * I believe will; nay, I am sure must, prove true.

* * * * * * *

I tell you very truly, I long for rest and quiet, equally necessary to my present state, both of body and mind. Could I do any good, I would sacrifice some more quiet to it; but, convinced as I am that I can do none, I will indulge my ease, and preserve my character. I have gone through pleasures, while my constitution and my spirits would allow me. Business succeeded them; and I have now gone through every part of it, without liking it at all the better for being acquainted with it. Like many other things, it is most admired by those who know it the least. And this one consideration would alone disgust one of it, even if one had the sole power; which is, that in this country one must, for political reasons, frequently prefer the most unworthy, to the most worthy; and prostitute to importunity and undeserving greediness the rewards of merit. Thus weary of business, you will easily imagine, that in retiring from my present business, I shall not engage in any other; but far from embarking upon any account in cabals and opposition, whenever I do take any part in the House of Lords, it shall be in support of the Government. Do not think neither that I mean a sullen retirement from the world; on the contrary, my retreat from business will give me both more time and better spirits for the enjoyment of social life, from which I will never withdraw myself. What day I shall resign the seals is not yet fixed: therefore, I desire that you will not, upon any account, mention one word of this letter, or give the least intimation to any one living, that you know any thing of

of this resolution. As I know the warmth of your friendship for me, and at the same time the warmth of your temper, I most earnestly recommend to you, nay, I insist upon your being discreet, when this event shall become public. There are those at the Hague, who will be glad to lay hold of any little slip of yours, in order to do you an injury: disappoint them by your discretion, and say nothing more upon it than that you knew that my health required exercise, and my temper quiet; and that you know too, that whenever I can, as a private man, be of any use to the king or to the public, I shall act the same out of place as I should have done in. This conduct I shall look upon as a proof of your friendship, and not of your coolness for me. As I shall always have a satisfaction in hearing from you, write to me, from time to time, as usual. * * * * *

Adieu for this time, my dear Dayrolles; and be convinced that, knowing as I do your merit, your good heart, your truth, and your affection, I shall, though hereafter a very useless one, be ever your very faithful friend.

LETTER XLII.

Ld. Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, Feb. 9, O. S. 1748.

Le sort est jetté (the die is cast): you receive this letter from a sincere friend, but not from a secretary of state; and I know you to be so true a friend too, that I am sure you value it more in the former character than in the latter. Last Saturday I resigned the seals into the King's hands, who parted with me in the most gracious manner possible. My health, my spirits, and my character, all concurred in this measure, and made it absolutely necessary for me. I retire without any personal quarrel with any man whatsoever; and if I disapproved of measures, it was by no means upon account of their authors. Far from engaging in opposition, as resigning Ministers too commonly do, I shall, to the utmost of my power, support the King and his government; which I can do with more advantage to them, and more honour to myself, when I do not receive five thousand pounds a-year for doing it. I shall now, for the first time in my life, enjoy that philosophical quiet, which, upon my word, I have long wished for. While I was able, that is, while I was young, I lived in a constant dissipation and tumult of pleasures; the hurry and plague of business, either in or out of court, succeeded, and continued till now. And it is now time to think of the only real comforts in the latter end of life, quiet, liberty, and health. Do not think, by the way, that by quiet and retirement I mean solitude and misanthropy; far from it, my philosophy as you know, is of a cheerful and social nature. My horse, my books and my friends, will divide my time pretty equally; I shall not keep less company, but only better, for I shall chuse it. Therefore do not fear finding me, whenever you take a little turn here, morose and cynical: on the contrary, you will find me as gentle as a dove; but, alas! not so amorous. At least, whatever else you find me, you will always find me with the truest affection, yours, &c.

P. S. Pray make my compliments to my Baron, and thank him both for his books and his letters: I will do it myself very soon.

LETTER XLIII.

The same to the same.

Bath,
Dear Dayrolles, Feb. 23, O. S. 1748.

Me voici, mon cher enfant (here I am, my dear boy), enjoying liberty and idleness, but attended with a great cold, which I got upon the road, in the coldest weather, and the deepest snow, that I ever remember. This has hindered me from drinking the waters hitherto: but that is no great matter, as I came here more for the sake of quiet and absence from London, while I was the only subject of conversation there, than for any great occasion that I had for the waters.

Without affectation, I feel most sensibly the comforts of my present free and quiet situation; and if I had much vanity in my composition, of which I really think that I have less than most people, even that vanity would be fully gratified, by the voice of the public upon this occasion. But, upon my word, all the busy tumultuous passions have subsided in me; and

and that not so much from philosophy, as from a little reflection upon a great deal of experience. I have been behind the scenes, both of pleasure and business. I have seen all the coarse pullies and dirty ropes which exhibit and move all the gaudy machines; and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole decoration, to the astonishment and admiration of the ignorant audience.

Since my resignation, my brother, as you will have seen in the news-papers, is appointed Commissioner of the Admiralty, which he never would have been as long as I had continued in, the resolution being taken to exclude all those who might otherwise have been supposed to have come in upon my interest. As I retire without quarrelling, and without the least intention to oppose, I saw no reason why my brother should decline this post; and I advised him to accept of it, and the rather as it was the King's own doing.

George Stanhope too, I am told, is now to have the rank of colonel given him, which I could never procure him; so that it seems, I have a much better interest out of place than I had in.

All goes well at Leipsig; the boy applies and improves more than I expected. Count and Countess Flemming, who saw him there, and who carried him to the Duchess of Courlande's, gave me a very good account of him; and assured me, that he was by no means the awkward English oaf, but *passablement décrotté* (tolerably polished). He shall stay there a year longer, and then go to Turin. If you should accidentally hear, or can procure, any memoirs of his private character, pray let me know them.

Remember the cautions which I gave you in one of my former letters. When Lord Sandwich goes to the congress, you will have a great deal to do, and play a considerable part at the Hague; which, I know, you are able to acquit yourself of very well. This, I think, will put you *en train d'être Monsieur l'Envoyé*, upon Lord Sandwich's return to his post here, which will be before it is very long: for, however little peace is at present intended, necessity will soon make it by the means of the *Maréchauv de Saxe et Lowendahl*; and then, being upon the place, I think you may reasonably ask, and probably obtain, the character and appointments of Envoy. * *

May you have all you wish! Adieu, yours.

LETTER XLIV.

The same to the same.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, Dec. 13, O. S. 1748.

My former was almost an answer, before-hand, to your last letter, which I received the day after I had wrote mine: I mean, with regard to the Rubens, which I desired you not to let slip. But I am now more confirmed in that opinion, by the drawing, which you sent me, and by the assurances that you give me of the picture's being a capital one, and in high preservation. Therefore, secure it as cheap as you can; the subject, as you observe, might have been a more pleasing one, but this admits of great expression.

The family piece, which you mention by Vandyke, I would not give six shillings for, unless I had the honour of being of Sir Melchior's family. The several portraits are, I dare say, finely painted; but then where is the action, where the expression? The good man and his wife generally sit serene in a couple of easy chairs, surrounded by five or six of their children, insignificantly motionless in the presence of papa and mamma; and the whole family seem as insipid, and weary, as when they are really together. Their likenesses may indeed be valuable to their own posterity, but in my mind to nobody else. Titian has done more skilfully in his fine picture of the Cornaro family, which he has put in action.

The Venus and Adonis of Vandyke, of which you likewise sent me the drawing, I do not care for, as it is a subject already *rebattu* by still greater masters, and in my mind better, as far as I can judge by the drawing; for Adonis, when he tears himself away from Venus, seems fierce and angry, which I see no occasion for. He is determined, indeed, to leave her for his field sports; but should, in my opinion, soften the rudeness by all possible complaisance in his words and look.

So much for *virtù*, which, when I shall have bought this picture, I have done with, unless a very capital Teniers should

should come in your way. You will draw upon me for the money as soon as ever you please. * * *

Could you send me, in some of your letters, some seed of the right canteloupe melons? I should not know what to do with more than a dozen, or at most twenty of them; so that all the seed I shall want will neither increase the bulk or weight of a letter. The canteloupes are in my opinion, the best sort of melons; at least they always succeed best here. It is for Blackheath that I want it, where you can easily judge that my melon-ground is most exceedingly small. I am obliged to keep that place for seven years, my poor brother's lease being for that time; and I doubt I could not part with it but to a very great loss, considering the sums of money that he had laid out upon it. For otherwise, I own that I like the country up, much better than down, the river.

As I promised to send Captain Irwin a couple of letters to the Hague, for Paris, I must put you to the expence of inclosing them to you, and to the trouble of giving them to him, not knowing how to direct them for him. Yours faithfully.

LETTER XLV.

Ld. Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, Dec. 23, O. S. 1748.

I HAVE received yours, with the inclosed drawing of the Vandyke, which must certainly be a very fine one, if the execution, as doubtless it is, be answerable to the disposition: but, however, I continue my negative to it, for the reasons which I gave you before, the price, and that it is a portrait, however fine a one. The Rubens, of which I have a great notion, must and shall, for a time at least, content me, unless I strain a little for the Teniers, which you hint at, which, if it be a capital one, I will; and then have done. My great room will be as full of pictures as it ought to be; and all capital ones.

I gave you by my last letter a very unnecessary trouble, which I now retract. I had forgot that you had some time ago stocked me with excellent canteloupe melon seed, which I have since remembered and found, and given to my gardener to sow at the proper season. I hope to give you some of them in perfection next summer; for I do not flatter myself with the hopes of seeing you here before that time.

Adieu, dear Dayrolles. I am hurried by a complication of most disagreeable affairs, but always yours.

LETTER XLVI.

The same to the same.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, May 9, O. S. 1749.

THE person who will give you this letter, is the nephew of Monsieur Boissier, a rich, and, for all that, a very honest merchant of the city, from whom I have received many civilities. He is a Swiss, and probably you know him by name and reputation. This nephew is desirous to get into the service of the republic; and I wish that you could be useful to him in that view. I do not mean, nor does he, that you can procure him a commission; but we think, that you may be able to point out to him *le moyen d'y parvenir*, (the way of succeeding); whatever that may be. If it be solicitation, you will tell him where to address it; if a private tip, you will tell him where to apply it. In short, I am sure that, from the part I take in him upon his uncle's account, you will do him what service you can.

By the way, do not apprehend from this, that I shall plague you often with recommendations of this kind, for I have refused them to several people, and shall continue to do so to nine in ten. They desire impertinent, unreasonable, or impossible things: and then desire that I would recommend them to you, because they are sure that I have great interest with you. My answer to which is, that I verily believe I have interest with you, and for that very reason will not recommend to you an impertinent or an impossible thing.

I am now assured, that Lord Holdernesse, though he has not yet kissed the King's hand, will go in three weeks at farthest; so that in six I hope to see you here. I need not tell you how glad I shall be of it. We have not been so long asunder, since we loved one another; as we still, I believe, do. Adieu.

LETTER XLVI.

The same to the same.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, Nov. 15, O. S. 1751.

I HAVE received yours of the 19th, N. S. for which this is only an acknowledgment, but no equivalent. All the news of yesterday, such as speech, addresses, &c. you will have authentically from the office; and I have nothing to add to it. * * *

Sans vanité, as people commonly say, when they say a vain thing, I am of my Baron's opinion, and think it would not be the worse for *la gouvernante*, if she pursued the measures which I mentioned in my last. I would not give her just the advice which Lord Clarendon was accused of having given King Charles II. at his restoration, not to mind his friends, but to gain his enemies. But I would advise her to think rather more of gaining over reasonable enemies, than of gratifying unreasonable friends. She should consult indiscriminately the ablest and the most respectable people of the several provinces upon the single principle of the public good, and without adopting their provincial piques and prejudices. She should take off all proscriptions, and mitigate all that military stuff of councils of war with unlimited powers, down to the mere necessary discipline of an army. Private and public œconomy should be her great objects; and if she would act firmly upon such principles, she would not want our advice, but I believe would do a great deal better without it. I would not desire a finer part to act than she has; and were I in her case, I would undertake to fix the present form of Government upon a more solid foundation than it has been upon since the time of William I.

Lord Holdernesse's baggage is not yet arrived, consequently I have not yet received my Baron's bill of fare, but by a little specimen of it, which he sent me lately in a specimen of a letter, I believe I shall not be able to furnish him with some of the rarities that he desires; for he composes these bills of fare upon the advertisements in the newspapers, and the pastry-cooks have been before-hand with him, at this season of minced-pyes. He is now pastorally inclined, and has wrote to me for some particular pastorals, which to this hour I am very sure no gentleman ever heard of or read.

My boy set out this morning for Paris, improved a good deal, in my mind, *du côte des manieres*. Lord Albemarle has promised to employ him in his *bureau* as much as if he were *sécretaire de légation*, and, if he does, it will be just as well as if he were, the salary excepted, which I do not much mind. In all events, he has time enough before him; and, if Paris will not do, some other place, some time or other will. Make my compliments to Madame Dayrolles. Adieu. Yours.

LETTER XLVIII.

The same to the same.

London,
Dear Dayrolles, May 19, O. S. 1752.

THIS goes to you from a deaf cripple-man, confined to his bed or his chair, for above a fortnight past. My little black mare, whom you have long known to be as quiet as any thing of her sex can be, wanted to drink in Hyde-Park. Accordingly I rode her into one of the little ponds, and in order to let her drink I loosed the bridon, which, by her ſtooping, fell over her head. In backing her out of the pond, her foot unluckily engaged itself in the bridon; in endeavouring to get clear of it, she hampered herself the more, and then, in a great *saut de mouton*, she fell backwards, and threw me with great violence about six feet from her. I pitched directly upon my hip-bone, which, by unaccountable good fortune, was neither fractured nor dislocated; but the muscles, nerves, &c. are so extremely bruised and strained, that to this moment, and this is the nineteenth day, I feel some pain, and cannot stand upon that leg at all. This confinement, especially at this time of the year, when I long to be at Blackheath, is not, as you will easily guess, very agreeable; and what makes it still less so, is my increasing deafness. I have tried a thousand infallible remedies, but all without success. I hope for some good from warm weather, for hitherto we have had none. But this is more than enough concerning my own infirmities, which I am of an age to expect, and have philosophy enough to bear without dejection.

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I can much more easily conceive that your affairs go on very slowly, than I can that they ever will be finished; but, in the mean time, *vous êtes bien, belle ville, bonne chère, et belle femme:* make the most of them all, enjoy them while you can, and remember that our pleasures, especially our best, last too little a while to be trifled with or neglected. As for your business, you and Mitchell, to whom my compliments, have nothing else to do, but to put yourselves behind your Dutch colleagues, whose distinguishing talent is to wrangle tenaciously upon details.

I do not believe now that a king of the Romans will be elected so soon as we thought; the Court of Vienna, long accustomed to carry its points at the expence of its allies, and sensible that we wish to bring this about, will not contribute any thing to it. But truly we must satisfy the electors and princes who stand out still, and form pretensions, possibly because they hope that it will fall to the share of England, who pays well to satisfy them. My young traveller will therefore, I fear, have full time to walk about Germany, before he has a call to Frankfort. He is now at Luneville, from whence he goes to Strasbourgh, and then follows the course of the Rhine, through Mayence, Manheim, Bonn, &c. to Hanover.

By his last account of the present state of France, the domestic disorders are so great, and promise to be so much greater, that we have but little to fear from that quarter. The king is both hated and despised, which seldom happens to the same man. The clergy are implacable upon account of what he has done; and the parliament is exasperated because he will not do more. A spirit of licentiousness, as to all matters of religion and government, is spread throughout the whole kingdom. If the neighbours of France are wise, they will be quiet, and let these seeds of discord germinate, as they certainly will do, if no foreign object checks their growth, and unites all parties in a common cause.

Having now given you an account of my distempers, my philosophy, and my politics, I will give you quarter, which, I can tell you, is great lenity in me; for a man, who can neither use his legs nor his ears, is very apt to be an unmerciful correspondent, and to employ his hand and eyes at the expence of his friends. I close this letter, and open a book. Adieu. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XLIX.

Ld. Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq.

Greenwich,
June 30, O. S. 1752.

Dear Dayrolles,

SINCE public events were neither the cause, nor the cement, of our long correspondence, that private friendship, that began, may even continue, without the assistance of foreign matter. We will reciprocally ask, and tell one another, how we do, and what we do: if we do little worth telling, which is and will be my case, our letters will be the shorter, but not the less welcome, for being only the messengers of friendship.

I am here in my hermitage, very deaf, and consequently alone. I read as much as my eyes will let me: and I walk and ride as often as the worst weather I ever knew will allow me. *D'ailleurs*, good health, natural good spirits, some philosophy, and long experience of the world, make me much less dejected and melancholy, than most people in my situation would be, or than I should have been myself some years ago. I comfort myself with the reflection, that I did not lose the power, till after I had very near lost the desire of hearing. I have been long and voluntarily deaf to the voice of ambition, and to the noise of business, so that I lose nothing upon that head; and when I consider how much of my life is past, and how little of it, according to the course of nature, remains, I can almost persuade myself that I am no loser at all. By all this, you see that I am neither a dejected nor a sour deaf man.

In spite of this cold and rainy weather, I have already eaten two or three of your canteloupe melons, which have proved excellent, and some very ripe muscat grapes raised in my anana-house, which is now stocked with African ananas, much superior to the American ones. The growth, the education, and the perfection, of these vegetable children, engage my care and attention, next to my corporal one, who is now going to Hanover, and who I hope will reward all my care, as well as all my ananas have done.

Adieu, my dear Dayrolles. I am most affectionately and truly yours.

LETTER L.

The same to the same.

Dear Dayrolles, London, Sept. 15, 1752.

In the first place I make my compliments to my god-son, who, I hope, sucks and sleeps heartily, and evacuates properly, which is all that can yet be desired, or expected from him. Though you, like a prudent father, I find, carry your thoughts a great deal farther, and are already forming the plan of his education, you have still time to consider of it, but yet not so much as people commonly think; for I am very sure, that children are capable of a certain degree of education long before they are commonly thought to be so. At a year and a half old, I am persuaded that a child might be made to comprehend the injustice of torturing flies and strangling birds; whereas, they are commonly encouraged in both, and their hearts hardened by habit. There is another thing, which, as your family is, I suppose, constituted, may be taught him very early, and save him trouble and you expence, I mean languages. You have certainly some French servants, men or maids, in your house. Let them be chiefly about him, when he is six or seven months older, and speak nothing but French to him, while you and Madame Dayrolles speak nothing to him but English; by which means those two languages will be equally familiar to him. By the time that he is three years old, he will be too heavy and too active for a maid to carry, or to follow him; and one of your footmen must necessarily be appointed to attend him. Let that footman be a Saxon, who speaks nothing but German, and who will, of course, teach him German without any trouble. A Saxon footman costs no more than one of any other country, and you have two or three years to provide yourself with one upon a vacancy. German will, I fear, be always a useful language for an Englishman to know, and it is a very difficult one to learn any other way than by habit. Some silly people will, I am sure, tell you, that you will confound the poor child so with these different languages, that he will jumble them all together and speak no one well; and this will be true for five or six years; but then he will separate them of himself, and speak them all perfectly. This plan, I am sure, is a right one for the first seven years; and before the expiration of that time we will think farther.

My boy has been a good while at Hanover: he kissed the king's hand, which was all I expected or desired. *Visage de bois*, you take for granted, *et c'étoit dans les formes*. But the Duke of Newcastle has been most excessively kind and friendly to him; had him always to dine with him, even *en famille*. * * * I am really most extremely obliged to the Duke of Newcastle, and will shew him that I am so, if ever I have an opportunity. He is now gone to Brunswick, and from thence goes to pass the carnival at Berlin: he will kiss your hands at Brussels in March or April, unless an election of a king of the Romans should call him to Frankfort; for I cannot help thinking, notwithstanding what I read in the news-papers, and what you hint in your last, but that there will be a king of the Romans elected before it is long. That affair has been too eagerly and publicly pursued, to be now dropped without ridicule and disgrace. At bottom, the court of Vienna must earnestly wish it, and its pretended indifference was merely to throw the whole expence upon us. We have been haggling all this time about it with the court of Vienna; which, I suppose, will at last be prevailed with to do something; and, we shall, according to custom, do all the rest. The electors, who are to be paid for it, as those of Palatine and Cologne, will be paid in a few ducats, and a great many guineas.

I leave my hermitage at Blackheath next week for Bath, where I am to bathe and pump my head; but I doubt it is with deaf people as with poets, when the head must be pumped, little good comes of it. However, I will try every thing, just as I take a chance in every lottery, not expecting the great prize, but only to be within the possibility of having it. My compliments to Madame Dayrolles. *Adieu, mon cher enfant.*

LETTER LI.

The same to the same.

Dear Dayrolles, Bath, Oct. 7, 1752.

Before this packet will reach you, another little round packet of mine probably will: I mean Mr. Stanhope,

who, by a letter of the 26th of September, which I have just received from him from Hanover, acquaints me that he is setting out to make his court to you at Brussels. I know your friendship for me too well to want any new proofs of it; and therefore I do very seriously insist, whatever either your friendship to me, or your attention to him, might otherwise make you intend, that you do not make him lodge in your house. Let him be your guest at dinner or supper, as often as you please, but very positively no longer. A dissipated young fellow of twenty is a very improper piece of furniture in a regular family. In short, *en un mot comme en mille*, all ceremony apart, I will not have him lodge in your house. *Au reste*, I put him entirely into your hands, do whatever else you will with him. Thrust him into company. Pray inform him a little of the affairs of the *barriere* and *tarif*, which are not of a secret nature; and inform me truly, and *de bonne foi*, how you find him now. Has he better air, address, and manners, than when you saw him last? I beg of you to reprimand him seriously if he has not. As being mine, look upon him as your own; as I should look upon my god-son as mine, being yours, were he with me, and of an age to be rebuked and reprimanded for his good.

I have been here now just a week, blistering, pumping, and drinking; by all which, I think, I have gained a little, though very little as to my hearing. Yours most affectionately.

LETTER LII.

Ld. Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq.

Dear Dayrolles, Bath, Oct. 13, 1752.

YOUR last letter of the 6th, and my last of the 10th, crossed one another somewhere upon the road, for I received yours four days after I had sent mine. I think I rather gain ground by the waters and other medicines; but, if I do, it is but slowly, and by inches. I hear the person who sits or stands near me, and who directs his voice in a straight line to me; but I hear no part of a mixed conversation, and consequently am no part of society. However, I bear my misfortune better than I believe most other people would; whether from reason, philosophy, or constitution, I will not pretend to decide. If I have no very cheerful, at least I have no melancholy, moments. Books employ most of my hours agreeably; and some few objects, within my own narrow circle, excite my attention enough to preserve me from *ennui*.

The chief of those objects is now with you; and I am very glad that he is, because I expect, from your friendship, a true and confidential account of him. You will have time to analyse him; and I do beg of you to tell me the worst, as well as the best, of your discoveries. When evils are incurable, it may be the part of one friend to conceal them from another; but at his age, when no defect can have taken so deep a root as to be immoveable, if proper care be taken, the friendly part is rather to tell me his defects than his perfections. I promise you, upon my honour, the most inviolable secrecy. Among the defects, that possibly he may have, I know one that I am sure he has; it is, indeed, a negative fault, a fault of omission; but still it is a very great fault, with regard to the world. He wants that engaging address, those pleasing manners, those little attentions, that air, that *abord*, and those graces, which all conspire to make that first advantageous impression upon people's minds which is of such infinite use through the whole course of life. It is a sort of magic power, which prepossesses one at first sight in favour of that person, makes one wish to be acquainted with him, and partial to all he says and does. I will maintain it to be more useful in business than in love. This most necessary varnish we want too much: pray recommend it strongly. * * *

He has, I dare say, told you, how exceedingly kind the Duke of Newcastle was to him at Hanover, for he wrote me word with transports of it. *Faites un peu valoir cela*, when you happen either to see or to write to his Grace, but only as from yourself and historically. Add too, that you observe that I was extremely affected with it. In truth, I do intend to give him to the two brothers for their own; and have nothing else to ask of either, but their acceptance of him. In time, he may possibly not be quite useless to them. I have given him such an education, that he may be of use to any court; and I will give him such a provision, that he shall be a burden to none.

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As for my god-son, who, I assure you, without compliment, enjoys my next warmest wishes, you go a little too fast, and think too far before-hand. No plan can possibly be now laid down for the second seven years. His own natural turn and temper must be first discovered, and your then situation will and ought to decide his destination. But I will add one consideration with regard to these first seven years. It is this:—Pray let my god-son never know what a blow or a whipping is, unless for those things for which, were he a man, he would deserve them; such as lying, cheating, making mischief, and meditated malice. In any of those cases, however young, let him be most severely whipped. But either to threaten or whip him, for falling down, be-pissing himself, or not standing still to have his head combed and his face washed, is a most unjust and absurd severity; and yet all these are the common causes of whipping. This hardens them to punishment, and confounds them as to the causes of it; for if a poor child is to be whipped equally for telling a lie, or for a snotty nose; he must of course think them equally criminal. Reason him, by fair means, out of all those things, for which he will not be the worse man; and flog him severely for those things only, for which the law would punish him as a man.

I have ordered Mr. Stanhope to pass six weeks in Flanders, making Brussels his head quarters. I think he cannot know it as he should do in less time; for I would have him see all the considerable towns there, and be acquainted and *faufilé* at Brussels, where there is a great deal of good company, and, as I hear, a very polite court.—From thence he is to go to Holland for three months. Pray put him *au fait* of the Hague, which nobody can do better than you. I shall put him into Kreuningen's hands there, for the reading, and the constitutional part of the republic, of which I would have him most thoroughly informed. If, by any letters, you can be of use to him there, I know you will. I would fain have him know every thing of that country, of that government, of that court, and of that people, perfectly well. Their affairs and ours always have been, and always will be, intimately blended; and I should be very sorry that, like nine in ten of his countrymen, he should take Holland to be the republic of the seven united provinces, and the States-general for the sovereign. *Mais à force d'être sourd je deviens bavard;* (deafness makes me loquacious:) so a good-night to you with Madame Dayrolles; and I think that is wishing you both very well. Yours most sincerely.

LETTER LIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Dayrolles, London, Feb. 16, 1753.

It is true, that I have been long silent; and am, contrary to custom, two letters in your debt. I would have paid better, had my specie been better; but it is really so bad, that it would be both imprudent and fraudulent in me to pretend to give it currency. But since you will take it for the sake of him whose image and inscription it wears, you shall have it, and with my wishes that it were better.

I grow deafer, and consequently more *isolé* from society every day. I can now say of the world, as the man in Hamlet, *What is Hecuba to me, or I to Hecuba?* My best wishes, however, will attend my friends, though all my hopes have left me. I have in vain tried a thousand things, that have done others good in the like case, and will go on trying, having so little to lose, and so much to get. The chapter of knowledge is a very short, but the chapter of accidents is a very long one: I will keep dipping in it, for sometimes a concurrence of unknown and unforeseen circumstances, in the medicine and the disease, may produce an unexpected and lucky hit. But no more of myself; that self, as now circumstanced, being but a disagreeable subject to us both.

I am very glad to hear that my god-son flourishes. I hope he is very noisy and very active, which, at his age, are the only symptoms of health and parts. * * *

I believe you are not at all sorry, for in your case I know I should not, that your great men have taken your negociations out of your hands. It secures you ministers of a subordinate rank from any blame, in whatever manner the negociations may be concluded, if ever they are concluded at all. The credit or the blame will be theirs, the appointments *en attendant* are yours. Adieu, my dear Dayrolles. I am most warmly and affectionately yours.

LETTER LIV.

Ld. Chesterfield to Solomon Dayrolles, Esq.

Dear Dayrolles, London, Jan. 1, 1754.

You fine gentlemen, who have never committed the sin or the folly of scribbling, think that all those who have, can do it again whenever they please; but you are much mistaken: the pen has not only its moments, but its hours, its days of impotence, and is no more obedient to the will than other things have been since the fall. Unsuccessful and ineffectual attempts are alike disagreeable and disgraceful. It is true I have nothing else to do but to write, and for that very reason perhaps I should do it worse than ever? what was formerly an act of choice, is now become the refuge of necessity. Though I keep up a certain equality of spirits, better, I believe, than most people would do in my unfortunate situation, yet you must not suppose that I have ever that flow of active spirits which is so necessary to enable one to do any thing well. Besides, as the pride of the human heart extends itself beyond the short span of our lives, all people are anxious and jealous, authors, perhaps, more so than any others, of what will be thought and said of them at a time when they cannot know, and therefore ought not reasonably to care for either. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, I will confess to you that I often scribble, but at the same time protest to you that I almost as often burn. I judge myself as impartially, and I hope more severely, than I do others: and upon an appeal from myself to myself, I frequently condemn the next day, what I had approved and applauded the former. What will finally come of all this I do not know; nothing, I am sure, that shall appear while I am alive, except by chance some short trifling essays, like the Spectators, upon some new folly or absurdity that may happen to strike me, as I have now and then helped Mr. Fitz-Adam in his weekly paper called The World.

The Irish part of the world, I take it for granted you have heard, is in the utmost confusion, and I now fear, and the more because I cannot foresee, the consequences of it. The beginning of the whole affair was only the old question, who should govern the government; this produced violent personal piques and acrimony, and consequently formed and animated parties. While these parties avowed and confined themselves to personal views, it signified little to the public which prevailed; but now the affair is become national, and consequently very serious. The speaker's party, which is now, by the ill management of others, become the majority of the house, deny the King's right to the surpluses of the Irish revenue, and in consequence of that principle have rejected a bill for the application of them, because the council here had inserted, and rightly, in the preamble of the bill, these words, *by and with the consent of his Majesty*. It is believed that the House of Commons will proceed to some personal votes. * * * This only is certain, that the Duke of Dorset is making what haste he can to come over here, and will not, nor cannot, go back again. Various successors are talked of, but I believe no one fixed. Some talk of Lord Holdernesse, who, in that case, they say, is to be succeeded in the secretary's office by the solicitor general, Murray. Others talk of Lord Winchelsea, as recommended by Lord Granville; and this I think not improbable; but some, who go deeper, name the Duke of Bedford; and this, I think, by no means impossible.

This is the season of well-bred lies indiscriminately told by all to all; professions and wishes unfelt and unmeant, degraded by use, and profaned by falsehood, are lavished with profusion. Mine for you, Mrs. Dayrolles, and my god-son, are too honest and sincere to keep such company, or to wear their dress. Judge of them then yourselves; without my saying any thing more, than that I am most heartily and faithfully yours.

LETTER LV.

The same to the same.

Dear Dayrolles, Blackheath, July 10, 1755.

If it was my *ennui*, and not my amusements, could I now have any, that occasioned my long silence; depend upon it, nothing else could or should. I break daily, my friend, both in body and mind, their union being very intimate. Spirits consequently fail, for they are the result of health, and I cannot say that, since I am here, I have had three days together un-

uninterrupted health. Sometimes strong returns of my inveterate giddinesses, sometimes convulsive disorders in my stomach, always languor, weakness, and listlessness. I find that I am got half-way down hill, and then you know the velocity increases very considerably. But what is to be done? Nothing but patience. Whatever the purest air, constant moderate exercise, and strict regimen can do, I have here; but they serve only to prolong, for a little time, an irksome situation, which my reason tells me, the sooner it is ended, the better. My deafness is extremely increased, and daily increasing; this cuts me wholly off from the society of others; and my other complaints deny me the society with myself, which I proposed when I came here. I have brought down with me a provision of pens, ink, and paper, in hopes of amusing myself, and perhaps entertaining or informing posterity, by some historical tracts of my own times, which I intended to write with the strictest regard to truth, and none to persons; myself not excepted. But I have not yet employed my pen, because my mind refused to do its part; and in writing, as well as in other performances, whatever is not done with spirit and desire, will be very ill done. All my amusements are therefore reduced to the idle business of my little garden, and to the reading of idle books, where the mind is seldom called upon. Notwithstanding this unfortunate situation, my old philosophy comes to my assistance, and enables me to repulse the attacks of melancholy, for I never have one melancholic moment, I have seen and appraised every thing in its true light, and at its intrinsic value. While others are outbidding one another at the auction, exulting in their acquisitions, or grieving at their disappointments, I am easy, both from reflection, and experience of the futility of all that is to be got or lost.

But *trope de réflections morales*, (too much of moral reflections.) A man may be too sober as well as too drunk to go into company, and his philosophical reflections may be as troublesome in one case, as his extravagancy in the other.

Well then; we will hope, you warmly and I coolly, that great things are reserved for us in the fifth and last class of this lottery; but if fortune will take my advice, though ladies are seldom apt to take the advice of old fellows, she will transfer whatever she intended to you or me to my god-son. * * *

The present situation of neither peace nor war is, to be sure, very unaccountable, and I cannot help fearing that we shall be the dupes of it at last. Surely we, I mean our ministers, ought to have known, before this time, which of the two the French really intended; and if they meaned peace, to have had it concluded; or, if they meaned war, to have given them the first blow at sea; for if, instead of that, you give them time to augment their marine, while you keep yours at an immense and useless expence, I believe they will be more explicit with you next year. The clamour at our inaction is universal and prodigious, people desiring something for their money. From that, and many other concurring causes, the next session will be a very boisterous one.

Adieu, my dear Dayrolles: Lady Chesterfield's and my compliments to Mrs. Dayrolles.

LETTER LVI.

Lord Chesterfield to Sir Thomas Robinson, Bart.

Sir, Blackheath, Oct. 13, 1756.

WHAT can a hermit send you from hence, in return for your entertaining letter, but his thanks? I see nobody here by choice, and I hear nobody by necessity. As for the contemplations of a deaf, solitary, sick man, I am sure they cannot be entertaining to a man in health and spirits, as I hope you are. Since I saw you I have not had one hour's health; the returns of my vertigoes and subsequent weaknesses, and languors, grow both stronger and more frequent, and, in short, I exist to no one good purpose of life; and therefore do not care how soon so useless and tiresome an existence ceases entirely. This wretched situation makes me read with the utmost coolness and indifference the accounts in the news-papers, for they are my only informers now you are gone, of the wars abroad, and changes at home. I wish well to my species in general, and to my country in particular; and therefore lament the havock that is already made, and likely to be made of the former, and the inevitable ruin which I see approaching by great strides to the latter: but, I confess, those

sations are not so quick in me now as formerly; long illness blunts them, as well as others; and perhaps too, self-love being now out of the case, I do not feel so sensibly for others, as I should do, if that were more concerned. This I know is wrong, but I fear it is nature.

Since you are your own steward, do not cheat yourself, for I have known many a man lose more by being his own steward, than he would have been robbed of by any other; tenants are always too hard for landlords, especially such landlords as think they understand those matters and do not, which, with submission, may possibly be your case.

I go next week to the Bath by orders of the skilful, which I obey, because all places are alike to me; otherwise, I expect no advantage from it. But in all places I shall be most faithfully yours.

LETTER LVII.

Lord Chesterfield to Dr. Cheyne of Bath.

Dear Doctor, London, April 20, 1742.

YOUR inquiries and advice concerning my health are very pleasing marks of your remembrance and friendship; which I assure you I value as I ought. It is very true, I have during these last three months, had frequent returns of my giddinesses, languors, and other nervous symptoms, for which I have taken vomits; the first did me good, the others rather disagreed with me. It is the same with my diet; sometimes the lowest agrees, at other times disagrees with me. In short, after all the attention and observation I am capable of, I can hardly say what does me good, and what not. My constitution conforms itself so much to the fashion of the times, that it changes almost daily its friends for its enemies, and its enemies for its friends. Your alkalised mercury, and your Burgundy, have proved its two most constant friends. I take them both now, and with more advantage than any other medicine. I propose going to Spa as soon as the season will permit, having really received great benefit by those waters last year, and I find my shattered tenement admits of but half repairs, and requires them annually.

The *corpus sanum*, which you wish me, will never be my lot; but the *mens sana* I hope will be continued to me, and then I shall better bear the infirmities of the body. Hitherto, far from impairing my reason, they have only made me more reasonable, by subduing the tumultuous and troublesome passions. I enjoy my friends and my books as much as ever, and I seek for no other enjoyments: so that I am become a perfect philosopher; but whether *malgre moi* or no, I will not take upon me to determine, not being sure that we do not owe more of our merit to accidents, than our pride and self-love are willing to ascribe to them.

I read with great pleasure your book, which your bookseller sent me according to your directions. The physical part is extremely good, and the metaphysical part may be so too, for what I know; and I believe it is; for, as I look upon all metaphysics to be guess-work of imagination, I know no imagination likelier to hit upon the right than yours; and I will take your guess against any other metaphysician's whatsoever. That part, which is founded upon knowledge and experience, I look upon as a work of public utility; and for which, the present age and their posterity may be obliged to you, if they will be pleased to follow it.

LETTER LVIII.

The late Bishop Horne to a young Clergyman.

Dear ———

I AM much pleased to hear you have been for some time stationary at Oxford; a place where a man may best prepare himself to go forth as a burning and shining light into a world where charity is waxed cold, and where truth is well-nigh obscured. Whenever it pleases God to appoint you to the government of a parish, you will find work enough to employ you; and therefore, before that time comes, you should be careful to provide yourself with all necessary knowledge, lest, by-and-by, when you should be building, you should have your materials to look for, and bring together; besides, that the habit of studying and thinking, if it be not got in the first part of life, rarely comes afterwards. A man is miserably drawn into the eddy of worldly dis-

dissipation, and knows not how to get out of it again, till, in the end, for want of spiritual exercises, the faculties of the soul are benumbed, and he sinks into indolence, till *the night cometh, when no man can work*. Happy, therefore, is the man, who betimes acquires a relish for holy solitude, and accustoms himself to bear the yoke of Christ's discipline in his youth; who can sit alone, and keep silence, and seek Wisdom diligently where she may be found, in the Scriptures of faith, and in the writings of the Saints. From these flowers of Paradise he extracts the honey of knowledge and divine love, and therewith fills every cell of his understanding and affections. The winter of affliction, disease and old age, will not surprize such an one in an unprepared state. *He will not* be confounded in the perilous time; and in the days of dearth he will have enough to strengthen, comfort, and support him and his brethren. Precious beyond rubies are the hours of youth and health! let none of them pass unprofitably away, for surely they make to themselves wings, and are as a bird cutting swiftly the air, and the trace of her can no more be found. If well-spent, they fly to heaven with news that rejoice angels, and meet us again as witnesses for us at the tribunal of our Lord. When the graces of time run into the glories of eternity, how trifling will the labour then seem that has procured us (through grace) everlasting rest, for which the apostles toiled night and day, and the martyrs loved not their lives unto death?

These, my dear———, are my sentiments; would to God my practice were more conformable to them than it is, that I might be less unworthy to advise and exhort others! but I trust the persuasion I have of the truth of what is said above (which every day's experience more and more confirms) will influence my conduct in this particular, and make me more watchful in time to come. In the mean season, I cannot forbear pressing the same upon you, as I should do with my dying breath; since upon the due proportioning and employing our time all our progress in grace and knowledge depends.

If there be any thing with regard to the choice or matter of your studies in which I can assist you, let me know, as you can have no doubt of my being, in all things, most affectionately yours.

NEW SECTION

OF

BOOK THE FOURTH.

SECTION V. (NEWLY ADDED.)

FROM THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

LETTER I.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Dear Joe, Huntingdon, June 24, 1765.

THE only recompence I can make you for your kind attention to my affairs, during my illness, is to tell you, that by the mercy of God I am restored to perfect health, both of mind and body. This, I believe, will give you pleasure, and I would gladly do any thing from which you could receive it.

I left St Alban's on the seventeenth, and arrived that day at Cambridge, spent some time there with my brother, and came hither on the twenty-second. I have a lodging that puts me continually in mind of our summer excursions; we have had many worse, and except the size of it (which however is sufficient for a single man) but few better. I am not quite alone, having brought a servant with me from St. Alban's, who is the very mirror of fidelity and affection for his master. And whereas the Turkish Spy says, he kept no servant because he would not have an enemy in his house, I hired mine, because I would have a friend. Men do not usually bestow these encomiums on their lackeys, nor do they usually deserve them. but I have had experience of mine, both in sickness and in health, and never saw his fellow.

The river Ouse, I forget how they spell it, is the most agreeable circumstance in this part of the world; at this town it is I believe as wide as the Thames at Windsor: nor does the silver Thames better deserve that epithet, nor has it more flowers upon its banks, these being attributes which, in strict truth, belong to neither. Fluellin would say, they are as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. It is a noble stream to bathe in, and I shall make that use of it three times a week, having introduced myself to it for the first time this morning.

I beg you will remember me to all my friends, which is a task will cost you no great pains to execute—particularly remember me to those of your own house, and believe me your very affectionate.

LETTER II.

To Lady Hesketh.

My dear Cousin, July 12, 1765.

YOU are very good to me, and if you will only continue to write at such intervals as you find convenient, I shall receive all that pleasure, which I proposed to myself from our correspondence. I desire no more than that you would never drop me for any length of time together, for I shall then think you only write because something happened to put you in mind of me, or for some other reason equally mortifying. I am not however so unreasonable as to expect you should perform this act of friendship

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so frequently as myself, for you live in a world swarming with engagements, and my hours are almost all my own. You must every day be employed in doing what is expected from you by a thousand others, and I have nothing to do but what is most agreeable to myself.

Our mentioning Newton's treatise on the Prophecies, brings to my mind an anecdote of Dr. Young, who you know died lately at Welwyn. Dr. Cotton, who was intimate with him, payed him a visit about a fortnight before he was seized with his last illness. The old man was then in perfect health; the antiquity of his person, the gravity of his utterance, and the earnestness, with which he discoursed about religion, gave him, in the doctor's eye, the appearance of a prophet. They had been delivering their sentiments upon this book of Newton, when Young closed the conference thus: —"My friend, there are two considera- "tions upon which my faith in Christ is "built as upon a rock: The fall of man, "the redemption of man, and the resur- "rection of man, the three cardinal ar- "ticles of our religion, are such as hu- "man ingenuity could never have invent- "ed, therefore they must be divine; the "other argument is this—If the Pro- "phecies have been fulfilled (of which "there is abundant demonstration) the "Scripture must be the word of God, "and if the Scripture is the word of "God, Christianity must be true."

This treatise on the Prophecies serves a double purpose, it not only proves the truth of religion, in a manner that never has been, nor ever can be controverted; but it proves likewise, that the Roman Catholic is the apostate, and Anti-christian church, so frequently foretold both in the Old and New Testaments. Indeed so fatally connected is the refutation of Popery, with the truth of Christianity, when the latter is evinced by the completion of the Prophecies, that in proportion as light is thrown upon the one, the deformities and errors of the other are more plainly exhibited. But I leave you to the book itself, there are parts of it which may possibly afford you less entertainment than the rest, because you have never been a school-boy, but in the main it is so interesting, and you are so fond of that, which is so, that I am sure you will like it.

My dear Cousin, how happy am I in having a friend, to whom I can open my heart upon these subjects! I have many intimates in the world, and have had many more, than I shall have hereafter, to whom a long letter, upon these most important articles, would appear tiresome at least, if not impertinent. But I am not afraid of meeting with that reception from you, who have never yet made it your interest, that there should be no truth in the word of God. May this everlasting truth be your comfort while you live, and attend you with peace and joy in your last moments. I love you too well not to make this a part of my prayers, and when I remember my friends on these occasions, there is no likelihood that you can be forgotten. Yours, ever.

P. S.—Cambridge.—I add this postscript at my Brother's rooms. He desires to be affectionately remembered to you, and if you are in Town about a fortnight hence, when he proposes to be there himself, will take a breakfast with you.

LETTER III.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Aug. 1, 1765.

My dear Cousin,

If I was to measure your obligation to write, by my own desire to hear from you, I should call you an idle correspondent if a post went by without bringing a letter, but I am not so unreasonable; on the contrary, I think myself very happy in hearing from you upon your own terms, as you find most convenient. Your short history of my family is a very acceptable part of your letter; if they really interest themselves in my welfare, it is a mark of their great charity for one who has been a disappointment and a vexation to them ever since he has been of consequence enough to be either. My friend the Major's behaviour to me, after all he suffered by my abandoning his interest and my own, in so miserable a manner, is a noble instance of generosity, and true greatness of mind: and indeed, I know no man in whom those qualities are more conspicuous; one need only furnish him with an opportunity to display them, and they are always ready to show themselves

selves in his words and actions, and even in his countenance at a moment's warning. I have great reason to be thankful —I have lost none of my acquaintance, but those whom I determined not to keep. I am sorry this class is so numerous. What would I not give that every friend I have in the world, were not almost but altogether Christians. My dear Cousin, I am half afraid to talk in this style, lest I should seem to indulge a censorious humour, instead of hoping, as I ought, the best for all men. But what can be said against ocular proof, and what is hope when it is built upon presumption? To use the most holy name in the universe for no purpose, or a bad one, contrary to his own express commandment, to pass the day, and the succeeding days, weeks, and months, and years, without one act of private devotion, one confession of our sins, or one thanksgiving for the numberless blessings we enjoy: To hear the word of God in public, with a distracted attention, or with none at all; to absent ourselves voluntarily from the blessed Communion, and to live in the total neglect of it, though our Saviour has charged it upon us with an express injunction, are the common and ordinary liberties which the generality of professors allow themselves; and what is this but to live without God in the world? Many causes may be assigned for this Anti-christian spirit, so prevalent among Christians, but one of the principal I take to be their utter forgetfulness that they have the word of God in their possession.

My friend, Sir William Russel, was distantly related to a very accomplished man, who, though he never believed the Gospel, admired the Scriptures as the sublimest compositions in the world, and read them often. I have been intimate myself with a man of fine taste, who has confessed to me, that though he could not subscribe to the truth of Christianity itself, yet he never could read St. Luke's account of our Saviour's appearance to the two disciples going to Emmaus, without being wonderfully affected by it, and he thought that if the stamp of divinity was any where to be found in Scripture, it was strongly marked, and visibly impressed upon that passage. If these men, whose hearts were chilled with the coldness of infidelity, could find such charms in the mere style of the Scripture, what must they find there, whose eye penetrates deeper than the letter, and who firmly believe themselves interested in all the invaluable privileges of the Gospel? "He that believeth on me, is pas-"sed from death unto life," though it be as plain a sentence as words can form, has more beauties in it for such a person, than all the labours antiquity can boast of. If my poor man of taste, whom I have just mentioned, had searched a little further he might have found other parts of the sacred history as strongly marked with the characters of divinity, as that he mentioned. The parable of the prodigal son, the most beautiful fiction that ever was invented; our Saviour's speech to his disciples, with which he closes his earthly ministration, full of the sublimest dignity, and tenderest affection, surpass every thing that I ever read, and like the spirit by which they were dictated, fly directly to the heart. If the Scripture did not disdain all affectation of ornament, one should call these, and such as these, the ornamental parts of it, but the matter of it is that, upon which it principally stakes its credit with us, and the style, however excellent and peculiar to itself, is the only one of those many external evidences by which it recommends itself to our belief.

I shall be very much obliged to you for the book you mention; you could not have sent me any thing that would have been more welcome, unless you had sent me your own meditations instead of them. Yours.

LETTER IV.

To Lady Hesketh.

Sept. 4, 1765.

THOUGH I have some very agreeable acquaintance at Huntingdon, my dear Cousin, none are so agreeable as the arrival of your letters. I thank you for that, which I have just received from Droxford, and particularly for that part of it, where you give me an unlimited liberty upon the subject, I have already so often written upon. Whatever interests us deeply, as naturally flows into the pen, as it does from the lips, when every restraint is taken away, and we meet with a friend indulgent enough to

attend to us. How many, in all that variety of characters, with whom I am acquainted, could I find, after the strictest search, to whom I could write, as I do to you? I hope the number will increase, I am sure it cannot easily be diminished. Poor ———— ! I have heard the whole of his history, and can only lament, what I am sure I can make no apology for. Two of my friends have been cut off during my illness, in the midst of such a life, as it is frightful to reflect upon, and here am I, in better health and spirits, than I can almost remember to have enjoyed before, after having spent months in the apprehension of instant death. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! Why did I receive grace and mercy? Why was I preserved, afflicted for my good, received, as I trust, into favour, and blessed with the greatest happiness, I can ever know, or hope for, in this life, while these were overtaken by the great arrest, unawakened, unrepenting, and every way unprepared for it? His infinite wisdom, to whose infinite mercy I owe it all, can solve these questions, and none beside him. If a free-thinker, as many a man miscalls himself, could be brought to give a serious answer to them, he would certainly say—— "Without doubt, Sir, you "was in great danger, you had a nar- "row escape, a most fortunate one, in- "deed." How excessively foolish, as well as shocking! As if life depended upon luck, and all that we are, or can be, all that we have or hope for, could possibly be referred to accident. Yet to this freedom of thought, it is owing that he, who, as our Saviour tells us, is thoroughly apprized of the death of the meanest of his creatures, is supposed to leave those, whom he has made in his own image, to the mercy of chance; and to this therefore, it is likewise owing, that the correction, which our heavenly Father bestows upon us, that we may be fitted to receive his blessing, is so often disappointed of its benevolent intention, and that men despise the chastening of the Almighty. Fevers, and all diseases are accidents, and long life, recovery, at least from sickness, is the gift of the physician. No man can be a greater friend to the use of means upon these occasions than myself, for it were presumption and enthusiasm to neglect them. God has endued them with salutary properties on purpose that we might avail ourselves of them, otherwise that part of his creation were in vain. But to impute our recovery to the medicine, and to carry our views no further, is to rob God of his honour, and is saying in effect, that he has parted with the keys of life and death, and, by giving to a drug the power to heal us, has placed our lives out of his own reach. He that thinks thus, may as well fall upon his knees at once, and return thanks to the medicine that cured him, for it was certainly more immediately instrumental in his recovery, than either the apothecary or the doctor. My dear Cousin, a firm persuasion of the superintendence of Providence over all our concerns, is absolutely necessary to our happiness. Without it, we cannot be said to believe in the Scripture, or practise any thing like resignation to his will. If I am convinced that no affliction can befall me, without the permission of God, I am convinced likewise, that he sees, and knows, that I am afflicted; believing this, I must, in the same degree, believe that if I pray to him for deliverance, he hears me; I must needs know likewise, with equal assurance, that if he hears, he will also deliver me, if that will upon the whole be most conducive to my happiness; and if he does not deliver me, I may be well assured, that he has none but the most benevolent intention in declining it. He made us, not because we could add to his happiness, which was always perfect, but that we might be happy ourselves; and will he not in all his dispensations towards us, even in the minutest, consult that end for which he made us? To suppose the contrary, is (which we are not always aware of) affronting every one of his attributes, and at the same time the certain consequence of disbelieving his care for us, is, that we renounce utterly our dependance upon him. In this view it will appear plainly, that the line of duty is not stretched too tight, when we are told, that we ought to accept every thing at his hands as a blessing, and to be thankful even while we smart under the rod of iron, with which he sometimes rules us. Without this persuasion, every blessing, however we may think ourselves happy in it, loses its greatest recommendation, and every affliction is intolerable. Death itself must

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be welcome to him, who has this faith, and he, who has it not, must aim at it, if he is not a madman. You cannot think how glad I am to hear, you are going to commence lady, and mistress of Freemantle.* I know it well, and could go to it from Southampton blindfold. You are kind to invite me to it, and I shall be so kind to myself as to accept the invitation, though I should not, for a slight consideration, be prevailed upon to quit my beloved retirement at Huntingdon. Yours ever.

LETTER V.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Sept. 14, 1765.

My dear Cousin,

THE longer I live here, the better I like the place, and the people who belong to it. I am upon very good terms with no less than five families, besides two or three odd scrambling fellows like myself. The last acquaintance I made here is with the race of the Unwins, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, the most comfortable, social folks you ever knew. The son is about twenty-one years of age, one of the most unreserved and amiable young men, I ever conversed with. He is not yet arrived at that time of life, when suspicion recommends itself to us in the form of wisdom, and sets every thing, but our own dear selves, at an immeasurable distance from our esteem and confidence. Consequently he is known almost as soon as seen, and having nothing in his heart, that makes it necessary for him to keep it barred and bolted, opens it to the perusal even of a stranger. The father is a clergyman, and the son is designed for orders. The design however is quite his own, proceeding merely from his being, and having always been, sincere in his belief, and love of the Gospel. Another acquaintance, I have lately made, is with a Mr. Nicholson, a North-country divine, very poor, but very good, and very happy. He reads prayers here twice a-day, all the year round, and travels on foot to serve two churches every Sunday through the year, his journey out and home again being sixteen miles. I supped with him last night. He gave me bread and cheese, and a black jug of ale of his own brewing, and doubtless brewed by his own hands. Another of my acquaintance is Mr.——, a thin tall, old man, and as good as he is thin. He drinks nothing but water, and eats no flesh, partly (I believe) from a religious scruple (for he is very religious) and partly in the spirit of a valetudinarian. He is to be met with every morning of his life, at about six o'clock, at a fountain of very fine water, about a mile from the town, which is reckoned extremely like the Bristol spring. Being both early risers, and the only early walkers in the place, we soon became acquainted. His great piety can be equalled by nothing, but his great regularity; for he is the most perfect time-piece in the world. I have received a visit likewise from Mr. ———. He is very much a gentleman, well-read, and sensible. I am persuaded in short, that if I had had the choice of all England, where to fix my abode, I could not have chosen better for myself, and most likely, I should not have chosen so well.

You say, you hope it is not necessary for salvation to undergo the same afflictions, that I have undergone. No! my dear Cousin, God deals with his children, as a merciful father; he does not, as he himself tells us, afflict willingly the sons of men. Doubtless there are many, who having been placed, by his good providence, out of the reach of any great evil, and the influence of bad example, have, from their very infancy, been partakers of the grace of his holy Spirit, in such a manner, as never to have allowed themselves in any grievous offence against him. May you love him more and more, day by day, as every day, while you think upon him, you will find him more worthy of your love, and may you be finally accepted by him for his sake, whose intercession for all his faithful servants cannot but prevail! Yours ever.

LETTER VI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Oct. 10, 1765.

My dear Cousin,

I SHOULD grumble at your long silence, if I did not know, that one may love one's

* Freemantle, a villa near Southampton.

one's friends very well, though one is not always in a humour to write to them. Besides I have the satisfaction of being perfectly sure, that you have at least twenty times recollected the debt you owe me, and as often resolved to pay it: and perhaps, while you remain indebted to me, you think of me twice as often as you would do, if the account was clear. These are the reflections, with which I comfort myself under the affliction of not hearing from you; my temper does not incline me to jealousy, and if it did, I should set all right by having recourse to what I have already received from you.

I thank God for your friendship, and for every friend I have: for all the pleasing circumstances here, for my health of body, and perfect serenity of mind. To recollect the past, and compare it with the present, is all I have need of to fill me with gratitude; and to be grateful is to be happy. Not that I think myself sufficiently thankful, or that I ever shall be so in this life. The warmest heart perhaps only feels by fits, and is often as insensible as the coldest. This at least is frequently the case with mine, and oftener than it should be. But the mercy that can forgive iniquity, will never be severe to mark our frailties; to that mercy, my dear Cousin, I commend you, with earnest wishes for your welfare, and remain your ever affectionate.

LETTER VII.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, Oct. 18, 1765.

I WISH you joy, my dear Cousin, of being safely arrived in port from the storms of Southampton. For my own part, who am but as a Thames-wherry, in a world full of tempest and commotion, I know so well the value of the creek, I have put into, and the snugness it affords me, that I have a sensible sympathy with you in the pleasure, you find, in being once more blown to Broxford. I know enough of Miss Morley to send her my compliments, to which, if I had never seen her, her affection for you would sufficiently entitle her. If I neglected to do it sooner, it is only because I am naturally apt to neglect what I ought to do: and if I was as genteel as I am negligent, I should be the most delightful creature in the universe. I am glad you think so favourably of my Huntingdon acquaintance, they are indeed a nice set of folks, and suit me exactly. I should have been more particular in my account of Miss Unwin, if I had had materials for a minute description. She is about eighteen years of age, rather handsome and genteel. In her mother's company she says little, not because her mother requires it of her, but because she seems glad of that excuse for not talking, being somewhat inclined to bashfulness. There is the most remarkable cordiality between all the parts of the family, and the mother and daughter seem to doat upon each other. The first time I went to the house, I was introduced to the daughter alone; and sat with her near half an hour, before her brother came in, who had appointed me to call upon him. Talking is necessary in a *tête-à tête*, to distinguish the persons of the drama, from the chairs they sit on: accordingly she talked a great deal, and extremely well; and, like the rest of the family, behaved with as much ease and address, as if we had been old acquaintance. She resembles her mother in her great piety, who is one of the most remarkable instances of it, I have ever seen. They are altogether the cheerfullest and most engaging family-piece, it is possible to conceive. Since I wrote the above, I met Mrs. Unwin in the street, and went home with her. She and I walked together near two hours in the garden, and had a conversation, which did me more good than I should have received from an audience of the first prince in Europe. That woman is a blessing to me, and I never see her without being the better for her company. I am treated in the family, as if I was a near relation, and have been repeatedly invited to call upon them at all times. You know what a shy fellow I am; I cannot prevail with myself to make so much use of this privilege, as I am sure they intend I should, but perhaps this awkwardness will wear off hereafter. It was my earnest request, before I left St. Alban's, that wherever it might please Providence to dispose of me, I might meet with such an acquaintance, as I find in Mrs. Unwin. How happy it is to believe with a stedfast assurance, that our petitions are heard, even while we are mak-

ing them—and how delightful to meet with a proof it in the effectual and actual grant of them! Surely it is a gracious finishing given to those means, which the Almighty has been pleased to make use of, for my conversion. After having been deservedly rendered unfit for any society, to be again qualified for it, and admitted at once into the fellowship of those, whom God regards as the excellent of the earth, and whom, in the emphatical language of Scripture, he preserves as the apple of his eye, is a blessing, which carries with it the stamp and visible superscription of divine bounty——a grace unlimited as undeserved; and, like its glorious Author, free in its course, and blessed in its operation!

My dear Cousin! Health and happiness, and above all, the favour of our great and gracious Lord attend you! While we seek it, in spirit and in truth, we are infinitely more secure of it, than of the next breath, we expect to draw. Heaven and earth have their destined periods, ten thousand worlds will vanish at the consummation of all things, but the word of God standeth fast, and they, who trust in him, shall never be confounded.

My love to all who enquire after me, Yours affectionately.

LETTER VIII.

To Major Cowper.

Huntingdon, Oct. 18, 1765.

My dear Major,

I HAVE neither lost the use of my fingers nor my memory, though my unaccountable silence might incline you to suspect, that I had lost both. The history of those things, which have, from time to time, prevented my scribbling, would not only be insipid, but extremely voluminous, for which reasons they will not make their appearance at present, nor probably at any time hereafter. If my neglecting to write to you were a proof, that I had never thought of you, and that had been really the case, five shillings a piece would have been much too little to give for the sight of such a monster! but I am no such monster, nor do I perceive in myself the least tendency to such a transformation. You may recollect that I had but very uncomfortable expectations of the accommodations, I should meet with at Huntingdon. How much better is it to take our lot, where it shall please Providence to cast it, without anxiety! Had I chosen for myself, it is impossible I could have fixt upon a place so agreeable to me in all respects. I so much dreaded the thought of having a new acquaintance to make, with no other recommendation than that of being a perfect stranger, that I heartily wished no creature here might take the least notice of me. Instead of which, in about two months after my arrival, I became known to all the visitable people here, and do verily think it the most agreeable neighbourhood, I ever saw.

Here are three families who have received me with the utmost civility, and two in particular have treated me with as much cordiality, as if their pedigree and mine had grown upon the same sheepskin. Besides these, there are three or four single men, who suit my temper to a hair. The town is one of the neatest in England, the country is fine, for several miles about it, and the roads, which are all turnpike, and strike out four or five different ways, are perfectly good all the year round. I mention this latter circumstance chiefly because my distance from Cambridge has made a horseman of me at last, or at least is likely to do so. My Brother and I meet every week, by an alternate reciprocation of intercourse, as Sam Johnson would express it; sometimes I get a lift in a neighbour's chaise, but generally ride. As to my own personal condition, I am much happier than the day is long, and sun-shine and candle-light alike see me perfectly contented. I get books in abundance, as much company as I chuse, a deal of *comfortable leisure*, and enjoy better health, I think, than for many years past. What is there wanting to make me happy? Nothing, if I can but be as thankful as I ought, and I trust, that He, who has bestowed so many blessings upon me, will give me gratitude to crown them all. I beg you will give my love to my dear Cousin Maria, and to every body at the Park. If Mrs. Maitland is with you, as I suspect by a passage in Lady Hesketh's letter to me, pray remember me to her very affectionately. And believe me, my dear friend, ever yours.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Dear Joe, Oct. 25, 1765.

I AM afraid the month of October has proved rather unfavourable to the belle assemblée at Southampton, high winds and continual rains being bitter enemies to that agreeable lounge, which you and I are equally fond of. I have very cordially betaken myself to my books, and my fire-side; and seldom leave them unless for exercise. I have added another family to the number of those I was acquainted with, when you were here. Their name is Unwin—the most agreeable people imaginable; quite sociable, and as free from the ceremonious civility of country gentlefolks, as any I ever met with. They treat me more like a near relation than a stranger, and their house is always open to me. The old gentleman carries me to Cambridge in his chaise. He is a man of learning and good sense, and as simple as parson Adams. His wife has a very uncommon understanding, has read much, to excellent purpose, and is more polite than a duchess. The son, who belongs to Cambridge, is a most amiable young man, and the daughter quite of a piece with the rest of the family. They see but little company, which suits me exactly; go when I will, I find a house full of peace and cordiality in all its parts, and am sure to hear no scandal, but such discourse instead of it, as we are all better for. You remember Rousseau's description of an English morning; such are the mornings I spend with these good people, and the evenings differ from them in nothing, except that they are still more snug and quieter. Now I know them, I wonder that I liked Huntingdon so well before I knew them, and am apt to think, I should find every place disagreeable, that had not an Unwin belonging to it.

This incident convinces me of the truth of an observation I have often made, that when we circumscribe our estimate of all that is clever within the limits of our own acquaintance (which I at least have been always apt to do) we are guilty of a very uncharitable censure upon the rest of the world, and of a narrowness of thinking disgraceful to ourselves. Wapping and Redriff may contain some of the most amiable persons living, and such as one would go to Wapping and Redriff to make acquaintance with. You remember Mr. Gray's stanza.

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The deep unfathom'd caves of ocean bear,
> Full many a rose is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its fragrance in the desert air.

Yours, dear Joe.

LETTER X.

To Lady Hesketh.

Huntingdon, March 6, 1766.

My dear Cousin,

I HAVE for some time past imputed your silence to the cause, which you yourself assign for it, viz. to my change of situation; and was even sagacious enough to account for the frequency of your letters to me, while I lived alone, from your attention to me in a state of such solitude as seemed to make it an act of particular charity to write to me. I bless God for it, I was happy even then; solitude has nothing gloomy in it, if the soul points upwards. St. Paul tells his Hebrew converts, "Ye are come "(already come) to Mount Sion." To an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. When this is the case, as surely it was with them, or the Spirit of Truth had never spoken it, there is an end of the melancholy and dullness of life at once. You will not suspect me, my dear Cousin, of a design to understand this passage literally. But this however it certainly means, that a lively faith is able to anticipate, in some measure, the joys of that heavenly society, which the soul shall actually possess hereafter.

Since I have changed my situation, I have found still greater cause of thanksgiving to the Father of all mercies. The family with whom I live, are Christians, and it has pleased the Almighty to bring me to the knowledge of them, that I may want no means of improvement in that temper, and conduct, which he is pleased to require in all his servants.

My

My dear Cousin! one half of the Christian world would call this madness, fanaticism, and folly: but are not these things warranted by the word of God, not only in the passages I have cited, but in many others? If we have no communion with God here, surely we can expect none hereafter. A faith that does not place our conversation in Heaven; that does not warm the heart, and purify it too: that does not in short, govern our thought, word, and deed, is no faith, nor will it obtain for us any spiritual blessing here or hereafter. Let us see therefore, my dear Cousin, that we do not deceive ourselves in a matter of such infinite moment. The world will be ever telling us, that we are good enough, and the world will vilify us behind our backs. But it is not the world, which tries the heart, that is the prerogative of God alone. My dear Cousin! I have often prayed for you behind your back, and now I pray for you to your face. There are many who would not forgive me this wrong, but I have known you so long, and so well, that I am not afraid of telling you how sincerely I wish for your growth in every Christian grace, in every thing that may promote and secure your everlasting welfare.

I am obliged to Mrs. Cowper for the book, which you perceive, arrived safe. I am willing to consider it as an intimation on her part that she would wish me to write to her, and shall do it accordingly. My circumstances are rather particular, such as call upon my friends, those, I mean, who are truly such, to take some little notice of me; and will naturally make those, who are not such in sincerity, rather shy of doing it. To this I impute the silence of many with regard to me, who, before the affliction, that befel me, were ready enough to converse with me. Yours ever.

LETTER XI.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Dear Joe, July 16, 1757.

YOUR wishes that the news-paper may have misinformed you, are vain. Mr. Unwin is dead, and died in the manner there mentioned. At nine o'clock on Sunday morning he was in perfect health, and as likely to live twenty years as either of us, and before ten was stretched speechless and senseless upon a flock bed, in a poor cottage, where (it being impossible to remove him) he died on Thursday evening. I heard his dying groans, the effect of great agony, for he was a strong man, and much convulsed in his last moments. The few short intervals of sense, that were indulged him, he spent in earnest prayer, and in expressions of a firm trust, and confidence in the only Saviour. To that strong hold we must all resort at last, if would have hope in our death; when every other refuge fails, we are glad to fly to the only shelter, to which we can repair to any purpose; and happy is it for us, when the false ground we have chosen for ourselves being broken under us, we find ourselves obliged to have recourse to the rock, which can never be shaken—when this is our lot, we receive great and undeserved mercy.

Our society will not break up, but we shall settle in some other place, where, is at present uncertain. Yours.

LETTER XII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

My dear Cousin,

I HAVE not been behind hand in reproaching myself with neglect, but desire to take shame to myself for my unprofitableness in this, as well as in all other respects. I take the next immediate opportunity however of thanking you for yours, and of assuring you, that instead of being surprized at your silence, I rather wonder that you, or any of my friends, have any room left for so careless and negligent a correspondent in your memories. I am obliged to you for the intelligence you send me of my kindred, and rejoice to hear of their welfare. He who settles the bounds of our habitations, has at length cast our lot at a great distance from each other, but I do not therefore forget their former kindness to me, or cease to be interested in their well being. You live in the centre of a world I know you do not delight in. Happy are you, my dear friend, in being able to discern the insufficiency of all it can afford, to fill and satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. That God, who created us left the enjoyment of himself, has de-

termined in mercy that it shall fail us here, in order that the blessed result of all our enquiries after happiness in the creature, may be a warm pursuit, and a close attachment to, our true interests, in fellowship and communion with Him, through the name and mediation of a dear Redeemer. I bless his goodness, and grace, that I have any reason to hope I am a partaker with you in the desire after better things, than are to be found in a world polluted with sin, and therefore devoted to destruction. May he enable us both to consider our present life in its only true light, as an opportunity put into our hands to glorify him amongst men, by a conduct suited to his word and will. I am miserably defective in this holy and blessed art, but I hope there is at the bottom of all my sinful infirmities, a sincere desire to live just so long as I may be enabled, in some poor measure, to answer the end of my existence in this respect, and then to obey the summons, and attend him in a world, where they who are his servants here, shall pay him an unsinful obedience for ever. Your dear mother is too good to me, and puts a more charitable construction upon my silence than the fact will warrant. I am not better employed than I should be in corresponding with her. I have that within, which hinders me wretchedly, in every thing that I ought to do, but is prone to trifle, and let time, and every good thing run to waste. I hope however to write to her soon.

My love, and best wishes, attend Mr. Cowper, and all that enquire after me. May God be with you, to bless you, and do you good, by all his dispensations; don't forget me when you are speaking to our best friend before his Mercy-seat. Yours ever.

N. B. I am not married.

LETTER XIII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

Olney, Aug. 31, 1769.

My dear Cousin,

A LETTER from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence, that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke with that resignation to his will, which none but Himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer and are acquainted with a throne of Grace! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions: and the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup, which your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand. May He now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace, in the midst of trouble. He has said, when thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee, and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time, when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those, who trust in him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before him, night and day, for I never expect to hear of distress, which shall call upon me with a louder voice, to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe, and am sure, that he will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in his holy habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust, and vanity in your sight, as it truly is, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor pain; but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. Oh that comfortable word! "I have "chosen thee in the furnaces of afflic- "tion;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us, because we are his children.

My dear cousin, I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his holy spirit. Your life is needful for your family, may God, in mercy to them, prolong it, and may he preserve you from the dangerous effects which a stroke like this, might have upon a frame so tender as yours. I grieve with you, I

pray for you, could I do more, I would, but God must comfort you. Yours, in our dear Lord Jesus.

LETTER XIV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 21, 1779.

AMICO mio, be pleased to buy me a glazier's diamond pencil. I have glazed the two frames, designed to receive my pine plants. But I cannot mend the kitchen windows, till by the help of that implement, I can reduce the glass to its proper dimensions. If I were a plumber, I should be a complete glazier, and possibly the happy time may come, when I shall be seen trudging away to the neighbouring towns with a shelf of glass hanging at my back. If government should impose another tax upon that commodity, I hardly know a business, in which a gentleman might more successfully employ himself. A Chinese, of ten times my fortune, would avail himself of such an opportunity without scruple, and why should not I, who want money as much as any mandarin in China? Rousseau would have been charmed to have seen me so occupied, and would have exclaimed, with rapture, "that he "had found the Emilius, who (he sup-"posed) had subsisted only in his own "idea." I would recommend it to you to follow my example. You will presently qualify yourself for the task, and may not only amuse yourself at home, but may even exercise your skill in mending the church windows; which, as it would save money to the parish, would conduce, together with your other ministerial accomplishments, to make you extremely popular in the place.

I have eight pair of tame pigeons. When I first enter the garden in the morning, I find them perched upon the wall, waiting for their breakfast, for I feed them always upon the gravel-walk. If your wish should be accomplished, and you should find yourself furnished with the wings of a dove, I shall undoubtedly find you amongst them. Only be so good, if that should be the case, to announce yourself by some means or other. For I imagine your crop will require something better than tares to fill it.

Your mother and I, last week, made a trip in a post-chaise to Gayhurst, the seat of Mr. Wright, about four miles off. He understood that I did not much affect strange faces, and sent over his servant on purpose to inform me, that he was going into Leicestershire, and that, if I chose to see the gardens, I might gratify myself, without danger of seeing the proprietor. I accepted the invitation, and was delighted with all I found there. The situation is happy, the gardens elegantly disposed, the hot-house in the most flourishing state, and the orange-trees the most captivating creatures of the kind I ever saw. A man, in short, had need have the talents of Cox or Langford, the auctioneers, to do the whole scene justice. Our love attends you all. Yours.

LETTER XV.

To the same.

Oct. 31, 1779.

My dear Friend,

I WROTE my last letter merely to inform you, that I had nothing to say, in answer to which you have said nothing. I admire the propriety of your conduct, though I am a loser by it. I will endeavour to say something now, and shall hope for something in return.

I have been well entertained with Johnson's biography, for which I thank you: with one exception, and that a swinging one, I think he has acquitted himself with his usual good sense and sufficiency. His treatment of Milton is unmerciful to the last degree.* He has belaboured that great poet's character with the most industrious cruelty. As a man, he has hardly left him the shadow of one good quality. Churlishness in his private life, and a rancorous hatred of every thing royal in his public, are the two colours, with which he has smeared all the canvas. If he had any virtues, they are not to be found in the Doctor's picture of him, and it is well for Milton, that some sourness in his temper, is the only vice, with which his memory has been charged; it is evident enough, that if his biographer could have discovered more, he would not have spared him. As a poet, he has treated him with severity enough, and has plucked one or two of the most beautiful feathers out of his muse's wing, and trampled them under his great foot.

He

He has passed sentence of condemnation upon Lycidas, and has taken occasion, from that charming poem, to expose to ridicule (what is indeed ridiculous enough) the childish prattlement of pastoral compositions, as if Lycidas was the prototype and pattern of them all. The liveliness of the description, the sweetness of the numbers, the classical spirit of antiquity, that prevails in it, go for nothing. I am convinced by the way, that he has no ear for poetical numbers, or that it was stopped, by prejudice, against the harmony of Milton's. Was there ever any thing so delightful as the music of the Paradise Lost? It is like that of a fine organ; has the fullest, and the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute. Variety without end, and never equalled, unless perhaps by Virgil. Yet the Doctor has little, or nothing, to say upon this copious theme, but talks something about the unfitness of the English language for blank verse, and how apt it is, in the mouth of some readers, to degenerate into declamation.

I could talk a good while longer, but I have no room; our love attends you.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XVI.

To the same.

Dec. 2, 1779.

My dear friend, how quick is the succession of human events! The cares of to-day are seldom the cares of to-morrow; and when we lie down at night, we may safely say, to most of our troubles—"Ye have done your worst, and "we shall meet no more."

This observation was suggested to me by reading your last letter; which, though I have written since I received it, I have never answered. When that epistle passed under your pen, you were miserable about your tithes, and your imagination was hung round with pictures, that terrified you to such a degree, as made even the receipt of money burthensome. But it is all over now. You sent away your farmers in good humour, (for you can make people merry whenever you please); and now you have nothing to do, but to chink your purse, and laugh at what is past. Your delicacy makes you groan under that, which other men never feel, or feel but lightly. A fly, that settles upon the tip of the nose, is troublesome; and this is a comparison adequate to the most, that mankind in general are sensible of, upon such tiny occasions. But the flies, that pester you, always get between your eye-lids, where the annoyance is almost insupportable.

I would follow your advice, and endeavour to furnish Lord North with a scheme of supplies for the ensuing year, if the difficulty I find in answering the call of my own emergencies, did not make me despair of satisfying those of the nation. I can say but this: If I had ten acres of land in the world, whereas I have not one, and in those ten acres should discover a gold mine, richer than all Mexico and Peru, when I had reserved a few ounces for my own annual supply, I would willingly give the rest to government. My ambition would be more gratified by annihilating the national incumbrances, than by going daily down to the bottom of a mine, to wallow in my own emolument. This is patriotism—you will allow; but, alas, this virtue is for the most part in the hands of those, who can do no good with it! He, that has but a single handful of it, catches so greedily at the first opportunity of growing rich, that his patriotism drops to the ground, and he grasps the gold instead of it. He, that never meets with such an opportunity, holds it fast in his clenched fists, and says—"Oh, how much good "I would do, if I could!"

Your mother says—"Pray send my "dear love." There is hardly room to add mine, but you will suppose it.

Yours.

LETTER XVII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

Dear Sir, May 3, 1780.

You indulge in such a variety of subjects, and allow me such a latitude of excursion in this scribbling employment, that I have no excuse for silence. I am much obliged to you, for swallowing such boluses, as I send you, for the sake of my gilding, and verily believe, I am the only man alive, from whom they would be welcome, to a palate like yours. I wish I could make them more splendid, than they are, more alluring to the eye, at least, if not more pleasing to the taste;

but my leaf-gold is tarnished, and has received such a tinge from the vapours, that are ever brooding over my mind, that I think it no small proof of your partiality to me, that you will read my letters. I am not fond of long winded metaphors, I have always observed, that they halt at the latter end of their progress, and so does mine. I deal much in ink indeed, but not such ink as is employed by poets, and writers of essays. Mine is a harmless fluid, and guilty of no deceptions, but such as may prevail, without the least injury, to the person imposed on. I draw mountains, vallies, woods, and streams, and ducks, and dabchicks. I admire them myself, and Mrs. Unwin admires them, and her praise, and my praise put together, are fame enough for me. Oh! I could spend whole days, and moon-light nights, in feeding upon a lovely prospect: My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour, as I have done for many years, there might, perhaps, be many miserable men among them, but not an unwakened one would be found, from the Arctic to the Antartic circle. At present, the difference between them and me, is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so, for rested in, and viewed, without a reference to their author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself, but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, "The maker of all these wonders "is my friend!" Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles, mine have been, and will be 'till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hot-house, rich as a West-Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with tentimes more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains, will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a green-house, which Lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with, and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—"This is not mine, 'tis a plaything "lent me for the present, I must leave "it soon."

LETTER XVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

May 8, 1780.

My dear Friend,

My scribbling humour has of late been entirely absorbed, in the passion for landscape drawing. It is a most amusing art, and, like every other art, requires much practice, and attention.

Nil sine multo
Vita, labore, dedit mortalibus.

Excellence is providentially placed beyond the reach of indolence, that success may be the reward of industry, and that idleness may be punished with obscurity and disgrace. So long as I am pleased with an employment, I am capable of unwearied application, because my feelings are all of the intense kind: I never received a *little* pleasure from any thing in my life; if I am delighted, it is in the extreme. The unhappy consequences of this temperature is, that my attachment to any occupation, seldom outlives the novelty of it. That nerve of my imagination, that feels the touch of any particular amusement, twangs under the energy of the pressure with so much vehemence, that it soon becomes sensible of weariness and fatigue. Hence I draw an unfavourable prognostic, and expect that I shall shortly be constrained to look out for something else. Then perhaps, I may string the harp again, and be able to comply with your demand.

Now for the visit you propose to pay us, and propose *not* to pay us. The hope of which plays upon your paper, like a jack-o-lantern upon the ceiling. This is no mean simile, for Virgil (you remember) uses it. 'Tis here, 'tis there, it vanishes, it returns, it dazzles you, a cloud interposes, and it is gone. However just the comparison, I hope you will contrive to spoil it, and that your final determination will be to come. As to the masons you expect, bring them with you—bring brick, bring mortar, bring every thing, that would oppose itself to your journey—all shall be welcome. I have a green-house that is too small,

come and enlarge it; build me a pinery; repair the garden wall, that has great need of your assistance; do any thing, you cannot do too much, so far from thinking you, and your train, troublesome, we shall rejoice to see you, upon these, or upon any other terms you can propose. But, to be serious—you will do well to consider, that a long summer is before you—that the party will not have such another opportunity to meet, this great while—that you may finish your masonry long enough before winter, though you should not begin this month, but that you cannot always find your brother and sister Powley, at Olney. These, and some other considerations, such as the desire we have to see you, and the pleasure we expect from seeing you all together, may, and, I think, ought to overcome your scruples.

From a general recollection of Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, I thought, (and I remember, I told you so,) that there was a striking resemblance between that period, and the present. But I am now reading, and have read, three volumes of Hume's History, one of which, is engrossed intirely by that subject. There, I see reason to alter my opinion, and the seeming resemblance has disappeared, upon a more particular information. Charles succeeded to a long train of arbitrary princes, whose subjects had tamely acquiesced in the despotism of their masters, till their privileges were all forgot. He did but tread in their steps, and exemplify the principles, in which he had been brought up, when he oppressed his people. But just at that time, unhappily for the monarch, the subject began to see, and to see, that he had a right to property and freedom. This marks a sufficient difference between the disputes of that day, and the present. But there was another main cause of that rebellion, which, at this time, does not operate at all. The king was devoted to the hierarchy, his subjects were puritans, and would not bear it. Every circumstance of ecclesiastical order and discipline, was an abomination to them, and in his esteem, an indispensable duty, and, though at last, he was obliged to give up many things, he would not abolish episcopacy, and till that were done, his concessions could have no conciliating effect. These two concurring causes, were indeed sufficient to set three kingdoms in a flame. But they subsist not now, nor any other, I hope, notwithstanding the bustle made by the patriots, equal to the production of such terrible events. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XIX.

To Mrs. Cowper.

May 10, 1780.

My dear Cousin,

I DO not write to comfort you: that office is not likely to be well performed by one, who has no comfort for himself; nor to comply with an impertinent ceremony, which in general, might well be spared upon such occasions: but because I would not seem indifferent to the concerns of those, I have so much reason to esteem, and love. If I did not sorrow for your brother's death, I should expect that nobody would for mine; when I knew him, he was much beloved, and I doubt not continued to be so. To live and die together, is the lot of a few happy families, who hardly know what a separation means, and one sepulchre serves them all; but the ashes of our kindred are dispersed indeed. Whether the American gulph has swallowed up any other of my relations, I know not; it has made many mourners.

Believe me, my dear Cousin, though after a long silence, which perhaps, nothing less than the present concern, could have prevailed with me to interrupt, as much as ever, Your affectionate kinsman.

LETTER XX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

July 27, 1780.

My dear Friend,

AS two men sit silent, after having exhausted all their topics of conversation; one says—"It is very fine wea-"ther,"——and the other says—"Yes;"——one blows his nose, and the other rubs his eye-brows; (by the way, this is very much in Homer's manner) such seems to be the case between you and me. After a silence of some days, I wrote you a long something, that (I suppose) was nothing to the purpose be-

cause it has not afforded you materials for an answer. Nevertheless, as it often happens in the case above stated, one of the distressed parties, being deeply sensible of the awkwardness of a dumb duet, breaks silence again, and resolves to speak, though he has nothing to say, so it fares with me. I am with you again in the form of an epistle, though considering my present emptiness, I have reason to fear, that your only joy upon the occasion will be, that it is conveyed to you in a frank.

When I began, I expected no interruption. But if I had expected interruptions without end, I should have been less disappointed. First came the barber; who, after having embellished the outside of my head, has left the inside just as unfurnished as he found it. Then came Olney bridge, not into the house, but into the conversation. The cause relating to it, was tried on Tuesday at Buckingham. The judge directed the jury to find a verdict favourable to Olney. The jury consisted of one knave, and eleven fools. The last mentioned, followed the afore-mentioned, as sheep follow a bell-wether, and decided in direct opposition to the said judge. Then a flaw was discovered in the indictment. The indictment was quashed, and an order made for a new trial. The new trial will be in the King's bench, where said knaves and said fools, will have nothing to do with it. So the men of Olney fling up their caps, and assure themselves of a complete victory. A victory will save me, and your mother, many shillings, perhaps some pounds, which, except that it has afforded me a subject to write upon, was the only reason, why I said so much about it. I know you take an interest in all that concerns us, and will consequently rejoice with us, in the prospect of an event in which we are concerned so nearly. Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXI.

To the same.

Aug. 6, 1780.

My dear Friend,

You like to hear from me—This is a very good reason why I should write—but I have nothing to say—This seems equally a good reason why I should not—Yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say to me——" Mr. Cowper, you have " not spoke since I came in, have you " resolved never to speak again?" It would be but a poor reply, if in answer to the summons, I should plead inability as my best, and only excuse. And this by the way, suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand; that a letter may be written upon any thing or nothing just as that any thing or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate, and doubt, whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it; for he knows, that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first, and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed, not by preconcerted or premeditated means, a new contrivance, or an invention never heard of before, but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving, as a postilion does, having once set out, never to stop, till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure, would say——" My good sir, a man has no " right to do either." But it is to be hoped, that the present century, has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last, and so good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul, or whatever be your name, step into your picture frame again, and look as if you thought for another century, and leave us moderns in the mean time, to think when we can and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, the gothic porch, smothered with honeysuckles, their little gar-

gardens, and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible, that a people, who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else, I suppose, they were our counterparts exactly, and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man at least, has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims, are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior, but in every other respect, a modern, is only an ancient in a different dress. Yours.

LETTER XXII.

To Mrs. Cowper.

Aug. 31, 1780.

My dear Cousin,

I am obliged to you for your long letter, which did not seem so, and for your short one, which was more than I had any reason to expect. Short as it was, it conveyed to me two interesting articles of intelligence. An account of your recovering from a fever, and of Lady Cowper's death. The latter was, I suppose, to be expected, for by what remembrance I have of her Ladyship, who was never much acquainted with her, she had reached those years, that are always found upon the borders of another world. As for you, your time of life is comparatively of a youthful date. You may think of death as much as you please (you cannot think of it too much) but I hope you will live to think of it many years.

It costs me not much difficulty to suppose, that my friends who were already grown old, when I saw them last, are old still, but it costs me a good deal sometimes to think of those, who were at that time young, as being older than they were. Not having been an eye-witness of the change, that time has made in them, and my former idea of them not being corrected by observation, it remains the same; my memory presents me with this image unimpaired, and while it retains the resemblance of what they were, forgets that, by this time, the picture may have lost much of its likeness, through the alteration, that succeeding years have made in the original. I know not what impressions Time may have made upon your person, for while his claws (as our grannams called them) strike deep furrows in some faces, he seems to sheath them with much tenderness, as if fearful of doing injury, to others. But though an enemy to the person, he is a friend to the mind, and you have found him so. Though, even in this respect, his treatment of us depends upon what he meets with at our hands; if we use him well, and listen to his admonitions, he is a friend indeed, but otherwise the worst of enemies, who takes from us daily something that we valued, and gives us nothing better in its stead. It is well with them, who, like you, can stand a tip-toe on the mountain top of human life, look down with pleasure upon the valley they have passed, and sometimes stretch their wings in joyful hope of a happy flight into Eternity. Yet a little while, and your hope will be accomplished.

When you can favour me with a little account of your own family, without inconvenience, I shall be glad to receive it, for though separated from my kindred by little more than half a century of miles, I know as little of their concerns, as if oceans, and continents were interposed between us. Yours, my dear Cousin.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Sept. 3, 1780.

My dear Friend,

I am glad you are so provident, and that while you are young, you have furnished yourself with the means of comfort in old age. Your crutch and your pipe, may be of use to you, (and may they be so) should your years be extended to an antediluvian date, and for your perfect accommodation, you seem to want nothing but a clerk called Snuffle, and a sexton of the name of Skeleton, to make your ministeral equipage complete.

I think I have read as much of the

first volume of the Biographia, as I shall ever read. I find it very amusing; more so perhaps, than it would have been, had they sifted their characters with more exactness, and admitted none but those, who had in some way or other, entitled themselves to immortality, by deserving well of the public. Such a compilation, would perhaps have been more judicious, though I confess it would have afforded less variety. The priests and monks of earlier, and the doctors of later days, who have signalized themselves by nothing, but a controversial pamphlet, long since thrown by, and never to be perused again, might have been forgotten, without injury, or loss to the national character for learning or genius. This observation suggested to me the following lines, which may serve to illustrate my meaning. and at the same time to give my criticism a sprightlier air.

Oh fond attempt to give a deathless lot
To names ignoble, born to be forgot
In vain recorded in historic page,
They court the notice of a future age;
Those twinkling, tiny, lustres of the land,
Drop one by one, from fame's neglecting hand;
Lethean gulphs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.
So when a child (as playful children use)
Has burnt to cinder a stale last year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire,
There goes my lady, and their goes the 'squire,
There goes the parson——Oh illustrious spark!
And there——scarce less illustrious——goes the clerk.

Virgil admits none but worthies into the Elysian fields; I cannot recollect the lines in which he describes them all, but these in particular I well remember—

Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo,
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluêre per artes.

A chaste and scrupulous conduct like his, would well become the writer of national biography.——But enough of this.

Our respects attend Miss Shuttleworth, with many thanks for her intended present. Some purses derive all their value from their contents, but these will have an intrinsic value of their own, and though mine should be often empty, which is not an improbable supposition, I shall still esteem it highly on its own account.

If you could meet with a second-hand Virgil, ditto Homer, both Iliad and Odyssey, together with a Clavis, for I have no Lexicon, and all tolerably cheap, I shall be obliged to you, if you will make the purchase. Yours.

LETTER XXIV.

To the same.

Sept. 7, 1780.

My dear Friend,

As many gentlemen as there are in the world, who have children, and heads, capable of reflecting upon the important subject of their education, so many opinions there are about it; and many of them just and sensible, though almost all differing from each other. With respect to the education of boys, I think, they are generally made to draw in Latin and Greek trammels too soon. It is pleasing no doubt to a parent, to see his child already in some sort a proficient in those languages, at an age, when most others are entirely ignorant of them; but hence it often happens, that a boy, who could construe a fable of Æsop, at six or seven years of age, having exhausted his little stock of attention and diligence, in making that notable acquisition, grows weary of his task, conceives a dislike for study, and perhaps makes but a very indifferent progress afterwards. The mind and body have, in this respect, a striking resemblance of each other. In childhood they are both nimble, but not strong; they can skip, and frisk about with wonderful agility, but hard labour spoils them both. In maturer years they become less active, but more vigorous, more capable of a fixt application, and can make themselves sport with that, which a little earlier would have affected them with intolerable fatigue. I should recommend it to you, therefore, but after all you must judge for yourself) to allot the two next years of little John's scholarship to writing and arithmetic, together with which, for variety's sake, and because it is capable of being formed into an amusement, I would mingle geography, a science which if not attended to betimes, is seldom made an object of much consideration;) essentially necessary to the accomplishment of a gentleman, yet, as I know (by sad experience) imperfectly, if at all, inculcated in the schools. Lord Spencer's son, when he was four years of age, knew the situation of every kingdom

dom, country, city, river, and remarkable mountain in the world. For this attainment, which I suppose his father had never made, he was indebted to a plaything; having been accustomed to amuse himself with those maps, which are cut into several compartments, so as to be thrown into a heap of confusion, that they may be put together again with an exact coincidence of all their angles and bearings, so as to form a perfect whole.

If he begins Latin and Greek at eight, or even at nine years of age, it is surely soon enough. Seven years, the usual allowance for these acquisitions, are more than sufficient for the purpose, especially with his readiness in learning; for you would hardly wish to have him qualified for the university before fifteen, a period, in my mind, much too early for it, and when he could hardly be trusted there without the utmost danger to his morals. Upon the whole, you will perceive, that in my judgment, the difficulty, as well as the wisdom, consists more in bridling in, and keeping back, a boy of his parts, than in pushing him forward. If, therefore, at the end of the two next years, instead of putting a grammar into his hand, you should allow him to amuse himself with some agreeable writers upon the subject of natural philosophy, for another year, I think it would answer well. There is a book called Cosmotheoria Puerilis, there are Durham's Physico and Astro-theology, together with several others in the same manner, very intelligible even to a child, and full of useful instruction.

LETTER XXV.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Feb. 15, 1781.

My dear Friend,

I am glad you were pleased with my report of so extraordinary a case. If the thought of versifying the decisions of our courts of justice had struck me, while I had the honour to attend them, it would perhaps have been no difficult matter to have compiled a volume of such amusing and interesting precedents; which if they wanted the eloquence of the Greek or Roman oratory, would have amply compensated that deficiency by the harmony of rhyme and metre.

Your account of my uncle and your mother gave me great pleasure. I have long been afraid to inquire after some in whose welfare I always feel myself interested, lest the question should produce a painful answer. Longevity is the lot of so few, and is so seldom rendered comfortable by the associations of good health, and good spirits, that I could not very reasonably suppose, either your relations or mine so happy in those respects, as it seems they are. May they continue to enjoy those blessings so long as the date of life shall last. I do not think that in these coster-monger days, as I have a notion Falstaff calls them, an antideluvian age is at all a desirable thing, but to live comfortably, while we do live, is a great matter, and comprehends in it every thing that can be wished for on this side the curtain that hangs between time and etetnity!

Farewell my better friend, than any I have to boast of either among the Lords —or gentlemen of the House of Commons.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

June 24, 1781.

My dear Friend,

The letter you withheld so long, lest it should give me pain, gave me pleasure. Horace says, the poets are a waspish race; and from my own experience of the temper of two or three, with whom I was formerly connected, I can readily subscribe to the character he gives them. But for my own part, I have never yet felt that excessive irritability, which some writers discover, when a friend, in the words of Pope,

"Just hints a fault, or hesitates dislike."

Least of all I would give way to such an unseasonable ebullition, merely because a civil question is proposed to me, with such gentleness, and by a man, whose concern for my credit and character, I verily believe to be sincere. I reply therefore, not peevishly, but with a sense of the kindness of your intentions, that I hope you may make yourself very easy on a subject, that I can perceive has occasioned you some solicitude. When I wrote the poem called Truth, it was indis-

dispensably necessary that I should set forth that doctrine, which I know to be true, and that I should pass what I understood to be a just censure upon opinions, and persuasions, that differ from, or stand in direct opposition to it; because, though some errors may be innocent, and even religious errors are not always pernicious, yet in a case, where the faith and hope of a Christian are concerned, they must necessarily be destructive; and because neglecting this, I should have betrayed my subject; either suppressing, what in my judgment, is of the last importance, or giving countenance, by a timid silence, to the very evils it was my design to combat. That you may understand me better, I will subjoin——that I wrote that poem on purpose to inculcate the eleemosynary character of the Gospel, as a dispensation of mercy, in the most absolute sense of the word, to the exclusion of all claims of merit on the part of the receiver; consequently to set the brand of invalidity upon the plea of works, and to discover, upon scriptural ground, the absurdity of that notion, which includes a solecism in the very terms of it, that man, by repentance, and good works, may deserve the mercy of his Maker—I call it a solecism, because mercy deserved ceases to be mercy, and must take the name of justice. This is the opinion which I said in my last, the world would not acquiesce in, but except this, I do not recollect that I have introduced a syllable into any of my pieces, that they can possibly object to; and even this I have endeavoured to deliver from doctrinal dryness, by as many pretty things, in the way of trinket, and plaything, as I could muster upon the subject. So that if I have rubbed their gums, I have taken care to do it with a coral, and even that coral embellished by the ribbon to which it is tied, and recommended by the tinkling of all the bells I could contrive to annex to it.

You need not trouble yourself to call on Johnson; being perfectly acquainted with the progress of the business, I am able to satisfy your curiosity myself—the post before the last, I returned to him the second sheet of Table-Talk, which he had sent me for correction, and which stands foremost in the volume. The delay has enabled me to add a piece of considerable length, which, but for the delay, would not have made its appearance upon this occasion—it answers to the name of Hope.

I remember a line in the Odyssey, which literally translated, imports, that there is nothing in the world more impudent than the belly. But had Homer met with an instance of modesty like yours, he would either have suppressed that observation, or at least have qualified it with an exception. I hope that, for the future, Mrs. Unwin will never suffer you to go to London, without putting some victuals in your pocket; for what a strange article would it make in a news-paper, that a tall, well dressed gentleman, by his appearance a clergyman, and with a purse of gold in his pocket, was found starved to death in the street. How would it puzzle conjecture, to account for such a phenomenon! Some would suppose that you had been kidnapt, like Betty Canning, of hungry memory; others would say, the gentleman was a Methodist, and had practised a rigorous self-denial, which had unhappily proved too hard for his constitution; but I will venture to say, that nobody would divine the real cause, or suspect for a moment, that your modesty had occasioned the tragedy in question. By the way, is it not possible, that the spareness, and slenderness of your person may be owing to the same cause? for surely it is reasonable to suspect, that the bashfulness, which could prevail against you, on so trying an occasion, may be equally prevalent on others. I remember having been told by Colman, that when he once dined with Garrick, he repeatedly pressed him to eat more of a certain dish, that he was known to be particularly fond of; Colman as often refused, and at last declared he could not; "But could not "you," says Garrick, "if you was in a "dark closet by yourself?" The same question might perhaps be put to you, with as much, or more propriety, and therefore I recommend it to you, either to furnish yourself with a little more assurance, or always to eat in the dark.

We sympathize with Mrs. Unwin, and if it will be any comfort to her to know it, can assure her, that a lady in our neighbourhood is always, on such occasions, the most miserable of all things, and yet escapes with great facility, through all the dangers of her state. Yours, *ut semper*.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

Oct. 6, 1781.

My dear Friend,

WHAT a world are you daily conversant with, which I have not seen these twenty years, and shall never see again! The arts of dissipation (I suppose) are no where practised with more refinement, or success, than at the place of your present residence. By your account of it, it seems to be just what it was when I visited it, a scene of idleness and luxury, music, dancing, cards, walking, riding, bathing, eating, drinking, coffee, tea, scandal, dressing, yawning, sleeping, the rooms perhaps more magnificent, because the proprietors are grown richer, but the manners and occupations of the company just the same. Though my life has long been like that of a recluse, I have not the temper of one, nor am I in the least an enemy to cheerfulness and good-humour; but I cannot envy you your situation: I even feel myself constrained to prefer the silence of this nook, and the snug fire-side in our own diminutive parlour, to all the splendour and gaiety of Brighton.

You ask me how I feel on the occasion of my approaching publication? Perfectly at my ease. If I had not been pretty well assured before hand, that my tranquillity would be but little endangered by such a measure, I would never have engaged in it; for I cannot bear disturbance. I have had in view two principal objects; first, to amuse myself—and secondly to compass that point in such a manner, that others might possibly be the better for my amusement. If I have succeeded, it will give me pleasure, but if I have failed, I shall not be mortified to the degree that might perhaps be expected. I remember an old adage (though not where it is to be found) "*bene vixit, "qui bene latuit,*" and if I had recollected it at the right time, it should have been the motto to my book. By the way, it will make an excellent one for Retirement, if you can but tell me whom to quote for it. The critics cannot deprive me of the pleasure I have in reflecting, that so far as my leisure has been employed in writing for the public, it has been conscientiously employed, and with a view to their advantage. There is nothing agreeable, to be sure, in being chronicled for a dunce; but I believe, there lives not a man upon earth, who would be less affected by it than myself. With all this indifference to fame, which you know me too well to suppose me capable of affecting, I have taken the utmost pains to deserve it. This may appear a mystery, or a paradox in practice, but it is true. I considered that the taste of the day is refined, and delicate to excess, and that to disgust that delicacy of taste, by a slovenly inattention to it, would be to forfeit, at once, all hope of being useful; and for this reason, though I have written more verse this last year, than perhaps any man in England. I have finished, and polished, and touched and retouched, with the utmost care. If after all, I should be converted into waste paper, it may be my misfortune, but it will not be my fault. I shall bear it with the most perfect serenity.

I do not mean to give ——— a copy: he is a good-natured little man, and crows exactly like a cock, but knows no more of verse than the cock he imitates.

Whoever supposes that Lady Austen's fortune is precarious, is mistaken. I can assure you, upon the ground of the most circumstantial, and authentic information, that it is both genteel, and perfectly safe. Yours.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the same.

Nov. 26, 1781.

My dear Friend,

I WROTE to you by the last post, supposing you at Stock; but lest that letter should not follow you to Laytonston, and you should suspect me of unreasonable delay, and lest the frank you have sent me, should degenerate into waste paper, and perish upon my hands, I write again. The former letter however, containing all my present stock of intelligence, it is more than possible, that this may prove a blank, or but little worthy your acceptance. You will do me the justice to suppose, that if I could be very entertaining, I would be so, because, by giving me credit for such a willingness to please, you only allow me a share of that universal vanity, which in-

inclines every man, upon all occasions, to exhibit himself to the best advantage. To say the truth however, when I write, as I do to you, not about business, nor on any subject that approaches to that description, I mean much less my correspondent's amusement, which my modesty will not always permit me to hope for, than my own. There is a pleasure, annexed to the communication of one's ideas, whether by word of mouth, or by letter, which nothing earthly can supply the place of, and it is the delight we find in this mutual intercourse, that not only proves us to be creatures intended for social life, but more than any thing else, perhaps, fits us for it.——I have no patience with philosophers—they, one and all, suppose (at least I understand it to be a prevailing opinion among them) that man's weakness, his necessities, his inability to stand alone, have furnished the prevailing motive, under the influence of which, he renounced at first a life of solitude, and became a gregarious creature. It seems to me more reasonable, as well as more honourable to my species, to suppose, that generosity of soul, and a brotherly attachment to our own kind, drew us, as it were, to one common centre, taught us to build cities, and inhabit them, and welcome every stranger, that would cast in his lot amongst us, that we might enjoy fellowship with each other, and the luxury of reciprocal endearments, without which a paradise could afford no comfort. There are indeed, all sorts of characters in the world; there are some whose understandings are so sluggish, and whose hearts are such mere clods, that they live in society without either contributing to the sweets of it, or having any relish for them—— a man of this stamp, passes by our window continually—I never saw him conversing with a neighbour but once in my life, though I have known him by sight these twelve years—he is of a very sturdy make, and has a round belly, extremely protuberant, which he evidently considers as his best friend, because it is his only companion, and it is the labour of his life to fill it. I can easily conceive, that it is merely the love of good eating and drinking, and now and then the want of a new pair of shoes, that attaches this man so much to the neighbourhood of his fellow-mortals; for suppose these exigencies, and others of a like kind, to subsist no longer, and what is there that could give society the preference in his esteem? He might strut about with his two thumbs upon his hips in the wilderness, he could hardly be more silent, than he is at Olney, and for any advantage or comfort, of friendship, or brotherly affection, he could not be more destitute of such blessings there, than in his present situation. But other men have something more than guts to satisfy; there are the yearnings of the heart, which, let philosophers say what they will, are more importunate, than all the necessities of the body, that will not suffer a creature, worthy to be called human, to be content with an insulated life, or to look for his friends among the beasts of the forest. Yourself for instance! It is not because there are no taylors, or pastry cooks, to be found upon Salisbury plain, that you do not chuse it for your abode, but because you are a philanthropist—because you are susceptible of social impressions, and have a pleasure in doing a kindness when you can. Now, upon the word of a poor creature, I have said all that I have said, without the least intention to say one word of it when I began.—But thus it is with my thoughts—when you shake a crab-tree the fruit falls; good for nothing indeed when you have got it, but still the best that is to be expected from a crab-tree. You are welcome to them, such as they are, and if you approve my sentiments, tell the philosophers of the day, that I have out-shot them all, and have discovered the true origin of society, when I least looked for it.

LETTER XXIX.

To the same.

March 7, 1782.

My dear Friend,

We have great pleasure in the contemplation of your Northern journey, as it promises us a sight of you and yours by the way, and are only sorry Miss Shuttleworth cannot be of the party. A line to ascertain the hour, when we may expect you, by the next preceding post will be welcome.

It is not much for my advantage, that the printer delays so long to gratify your expectation. It is a state of mind, that is apt to tire and disconcert us; and there

there are but few pleasures, that make us amends for the pain of repeated disappointment. I take it for granted you have not received the volume, not having received it myself, nor indeed heard from Johnson, since he fixed the first of the month for its publication.

What a medley are our public prints, half the page filled with the ruin of the country, and the other half filled with the vices and pleasures of it—here is an island taken, and there a new comedy—here an empire lost, and there an Italian opera, or a Lord's rout on a Sunday.

" May it please your Lordship! I am " an Englishman, and must stand or fall " with the nation. Religion, its true " Palladium, has been stolen away; and " it is crumbling into dust. Sin ruins " us, the sins of the great especially, and " of their sins especially the violation of " the Sabbath, because it is naturally " productive of all the rest. If you wish " well to our arms, and would be glad " to see the kingdom, emerging from her " ruins, pay more respect to an ordi- " nance, that deserves the deepest! I do " not say pardon this short remonstrance! " —The concern I feel for my country, " and the interest I have in its prospe- " rity, gave me a right to make it. I " am, &c."

Thus one might write to his Lordship, and (I suppose) might be as profitably employed in whistling the tune of an old ballad.

I have no copy of the Preface, nor do I know at present, how Johnson and Mr. Newton have settled it. In the matter of it there was nothing offensively peculiar. But it was thought too pious.

Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXX.

To the same.

My dear Friend, Aug. 25. 1781.

We rejoice with you sincerely in the birth of another son, and in the prospect you have of Mrs. Unwin's recovery; may your three children, and the next three, when they shall make their appearance, prove so many blessings to their parents, and make you wish that you had twice the number. But what made you expect daily that you should hear from me? Letter for letter is the law of all correspondence whatsoever, and because I wrote last, I have indulged myself for some time in expectation of a sheet from you. Not that I govern myself entirely by the punctilio of reciprocation, but having been pretty much occupied of late, I was not sorry to find myself at liberty to exercise my discretion, and furnished with a good excuse if I chose to be silent.

I expected, as you remember, to have been published last spring, and was disappointed. The delay has afforded me an opportunity to increase the quantity of my publication by about a third; and if my muse has not forsaken me, which I rather suspect to be the case, may possibly yet add to it. I have a subject in hand, which promises me a great abundance of poetical matter, but which, for want of a something, I am not able to describe, I cannot at present proceed with. The name of it is Retirement, and my purpose to recommend the proper improvement of it, to set forth the requisites for that end, and to enlarge upon the happiness of that state of life, when managed as it ought to be. In the course of my journey through this ample theme, I should wish to touch upon the characters, the deficiencies, and the mistakes of thousands, who enter on a scene of retirement, unqualified for it in every respect, and with such designs as have no tendency to promote either their own happiness, or that of others. But as I have told you before, there are times when I am no more a poet than I am a mathematician, and when such a time occurs, I always think it better to give up the point, than to labour it in vain. I shall yet again be obliged to trouble you for franks. The addition of three thousand lines, or near that number, having occasioned a demand which I did not always foresee, but your obliging friend, and your obliging self, having allowed me the liberty of application, I make it without apology.

The solitude, or rather the duality of our condition at Olney, seems drawing to a conclusion. You have not forgot perhaps that the building we inhabit consists of two mansions. And because you have only seen the inside of that part of it which is in our occupation, I therefore inform you, that the other end of it is by far the most superb, as well as the

the most commodious. Lady Austen has seen it, has set her heart upon it, is going to fit it up and furnish it, and if she can get rid of the remaining two years of the lease of her London house, will probably enter upon it in a twelvemonth. You will be pleased with this intelligence, because I have already told you that she is a woman perfectly well-bred, sensible, and in every respect agreeable; and above all, because she loves your mother dearly. It has in my eyes (and I doubt not it will have the same in yours) strong marks of providential interposition. A female friend, and one who bids fair to prove herself worthy of the appellation, comes recommended by a variety of considerations, to such a place as Olney. Since Mr. Newton went, and till this lady came, there was not in the kingdom a retirement more absolutely such than ours. We did not want company, but when it came, we found it agreeable. A person that has seen much of the world, and understands it well, has high spirits, a lively fancy, and great readiness of conversation, introduces a sprightliness into such a scene as this, which if it was peaceful before, is not the worse for being a little enlivened. In case of illness too, to which all are liable, it was rather a gloomy prospect, if we allowed ourselves to advert to it, that there was hardly a woman in the place from whom it would have been reasonable to have expected either comfort or assistance. The present curate's wife is a valuable person, but has a family of her own, and though a neighbour, is not a very near one. But if this plan is effected, we shall be in a manner one family, and I suppose never pass a day without some intercousres with each other.

Your mother sends her warm affections, and welcomes into the world the new-born William. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXXI.

To the same.

My dear Friend, Feb. 9, 1782.

I THANK you for Mr. Lowth's verses. They are so good, that had I been present when he spoke them, I should have trembled for the boy, lest the man should disappoint the hopes such early powers had given birth to. It is not common to see so lively a fancy so correctly managed, and so free from irregular exuberance; at so unexperienced an age, fruitful, yet not wanton, and gay without being taudry. When school-boys write verse, if they have any fire at all, it generally spends itself in flashes, and transient sparks, which may indeed suggest an expectation of something better hereafter, but deserve not to be much commended for any real merit of their own. Their wit is generally forced and false, and their sublimity, if they affect any, bombast. I remember well when it was thus with me, and when a turgid, noisy, unmeaning speech in a tragedy, which I should now laugh at, afforded me raptures, and filled me with wonder. It is not in general, till reading and observation have settled the taste, that we can give the prize to the best writing, in preference to the worst. Much less are we able to execute what is good ourselves. But Lowth seems to have stepped into excellence at once, and to have gained by intuition, what we little folks are happy if we can learn at last, after much labour of our own, and instruction of others. The compliments he pays to the memory of King Charles, he would probably now retract, though he be a bishop, and his majesty's zeal for episcopacy was one of the causes of his ruin. An age or two must pass, before some characters can be properly understood. The spirit of party employs itself in veiling their faults, and ascribing to them virtues, which they never possessed. See Charles's face drawn by Clarendon, and it is an handsome portrait. See it more justly exhibited by Mrs. Macauley, and it is deformed to a degree that shocks us. Every feature expresses cunning, employing itself in the maintaining of tyranny; and dissimulation, pretending itself an advocate for truth.

My letters have already apprized you of that close and intimate connexion that took place between the lady you visited in Queen Anne's street, and us. Nothing could be more promising, though sudden in the commencement. She treated us with as much unreservedness of communication, as if we had been born in the same house, and educated together. At her departure, she herself proposed a correspondence, and because writing does not agree with your mother, proposed a correspondence with me. By her own de-

desire I wrote to her under the assumed relation of a brother, and she to me as my sister.

I thank you for the search you have made after my intended motto, but I no longer need it.

Our love is always with yourself and family. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XXXII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, March 18, 1782.

NOTHING has given me so much pleasure, since the publication of my volume, as your favourable opinion of it. It may possibly meet with acceptance from hundreds, whose commendation would afford me no other satisfaction than what I should find in the hope that it might do them good. I have some neighbours in this place, who say they like it—doubtless I would rather they should, than that they should not—but I know them to be persons of no more taste in poetry, than skill in the mathematics; their applause therefore is a sound that has no music in it for me. But my vanity was not so entirely quiescent when I read your friendly account of the manner it had affected *you*. It was tickled, and pleased, and told me in a pretty loud whisper, that others perhaps, of whose taste and judgment I had an high opinion, would approve it too. As a giver of good counsel, I wish to please all—as an author, I am perfectly indifferent to the judgment of all, except the few who are indeed judicious. The circumstance however in your letter which pleased me most, was, that you wrote in high spirits, and though you said much, suppressed more, lest you should hurt my delicacy—my delicacy is obliged to you—but you observe it is not so squeamish, but that after it has feasted upon praise expressed, it can find a comfortable desert in the contemplation of praise implied. I now feel as if I should be glad to begin another volume, but from the will to the power is a step too wide for me to take at present, and the season of the year brings with it so many avocations in the garden, where I am my own *fac totum*, that I have little or no leisure for the quill. I should do myself much wrong, were I to omit mentioning the great complacency with which I read your narrative of Mrs. Unwin's smiles and tears: persons of much sensibility are always persons of taste, and a taste for poetry depends indeed upon that very article more than upon any other. If she had Aristotle by heart, I should not esteem her judgment so highly, were she defective in point of feeling, as I do, and must esteem it, knowing her to have such feelings as Aristotle could not communicate, and as half the readers in the world are destitute of. This it is that makes me set so high a price upon your mother's opinion. She is a critic by nature, and not by rule, and has a perception of what is good or bad in composition, that I never knew deceive her, insomuch, that when two sorts of expression have pleaded equally for the precedence, in my own esteem, and I have referred, as in such cases I always did, the decision of the point to her, I never knew her at a loss for a just one.

Whether I shall receive any answer from his Chancellorship or not, is at present *in ambiguo*, and will probably continue in the same state of ambiguity much longer. He is so busy a man, and at this time, if the papers may be credited, so particularly busy that I am forced to mortify myself with the thought, that both my book, and my letter, may be thrown into a corner as too insignificant for a statesman's notice, and never found till his executor finds them. This affair, however, is neither at my *libitum* nor his. I have sent him the truth. He that put it into the heart of a certain Eastern monarch, to amuse himself one sleepless night, with listening to the records of his kingdom, is able to give birth to such another occasion, and inspire his lordship with a curiosity to know, what he has received from a friend he once loved and valued. If an answer comes however, you shall not long be a stranger to the contents of it.

I have read your letter to their worships, and much approve of it. May it have the desired effect it ought! If not, still you have acted an humane and becoming part, and the poor aching toes and fingers of the prisoners, will not appear in judgment against you. I have made a slight alteration in the last sentence, which perhaps you will not disapprove. Yours ever.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, April 1, 1782.

I could not have found a better trumpeter. Your zeal to serve the interest of my volume, together with your extensive acquaintance, qualify you perfectly for that most useful office. Methinks I see you with the long tube at your mouth, proclaiming to your numerous connexions, my poetical merits, and at proper intervals levelling it at Olney, and pouring into my ear, the welcome sound of their approbation. I need not encourage you to proceed, your breath will never fail in such a cause; and thus encouraged, I myself perhaps may proceed also, and when the versifying fit returns, produce another volume. Alas! we shall never receive such commendations from him on the woolsack, as your good friend has lavished upon us. Whence I learn, that however important I may be in my own eyes, I am very insignificant in his. To make me amends, however, for this mortification, Mr. Newton tells me, that my book is likely to run, spread, and prosper: that the grave cannot help smiling, and the gay are struck with the truth of it: and that it is likely to find its way into his Majesty's hands, being put into a proper course for that purpose. Now if the King should fall in love with my muse, and with you for her sake, such an event would make us ample amends for the Chancellor's indifference, and you might be the first divine that ever reached a mitre, from the shoulders of a poet. But (I believe) we must be content, I with my gains, if I gain any thing, and you with the pleasure of knowing, that I am a gainer.

We laughed heartily at your answer to little John's question; and yet I think you might have given him a direct answer—"There are various sorts of cleverness, my dear—I do not know that mine lies in the poetical way, but I can do ten times more towards the entertainment of company in the way of conversation, than our friend at Olney. He can rhyme, and I can rattle. If he had my talent, or I had his, we should be too charming, and the world would almost adore us." Yours,

LETTER XXXIII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, June 12, 1782.

Every extraordinary occurrence in our lives, affords us an opportunity to learn, if we will, something more of our own hearts, and tempers, than we were before aware of. It is easy to promise ourselves before hand, that our conduct shall be wise or moderate, or resolute, on any given occasion. But when that occasion occurs, we do not always find it easy to make good the promise: such a difference there is between theory and practice. Perhaps this is no new remark, but it is not a whit the worse for being old, if it be true.

Before I had published, I said to myself—you and I, Mr. Cowper, will not concern ourselves much about what the critics may say of our book. But having once sent my wits for a venture, I soon became anxious about the issue, and found that I could not be satisfied with a warm place in my own good graces, unless my friends were pleased with me as much as I pleased myself. Meeting with their approbation, I began to feel the workings of ambition. It is well, said I, that my friends are pleased, but friends are sometimes partial, and mine, I have reason to think, are not altogether free from bias. Methinks I should like to hear a stranger or two speak well of me. I was presently gratified by the approbation of the London Magazine, and the Gentleman's, particularly by that of the former, and by the plaudit of Dr. Franklin. By the way, magazines are publications we have but little respect for, till we ourselves are chronicled in them, and then they assume an importance in our esteem, which before we could not allow them. But the Monthly Review, the most formidable of all my judges, is still behind. What will that critical Rhadamanthus say, when my shivering genius shall appear before him? Still he keeps me in hot water, and I must wait another month for his award.. Alas! when I wish for a favourable sentence from that quarter (to confess a weakness, that I should not confess to all) I feel myself not a little influenced by a tender regard to my reputation here, even among my neighbours at

at Olney. Here are watch-makers, who themselves are wits, and who, at present perhaps, think me one. Here is a carpenter, and a baker, and not to mention others, here is your idol Mr. ——, whose smile is fame. All these read the Monthly Review, and all these will set me down for a dunce, if those terrible critics should show them the example. But oh! wherever else I am accounted dull, dear Mr. Griffith, let me pass for a genius at Olney.

We are sorry for little William's illness. It is however the privilege of infancy to recover almost immediately, what it has lost by sickness. We are sorry too for Mr. ——'s dangerous condition. But he that is well prepared for the great journey, cannot enter on it too soon for himself, though his friends will weep at his departure. Yours.

LETTER XXXV.

To the same.

July 16, 1782.

My dear Friend,

THOUGH some people pretend to be clever in the way of prophetical forecast, and to have a peculiar talent of sagacity, by which they can divine the meaning of a providential dispensation, while its consequences are yet in embryo —I do not. There is at this time to be found, I suppose, in the cabinet, and in both houses, a greater assemblage of able men, both as speakers and counsellors, than ever were cotemporary in the same land. A man, not accustomed to trace the workings of Providence, as recorded in scripture, and that has given no attention to this particular subject, while employed in the study of profane history, would assert boldly, that it is a token for good, that much may be expected from them, and that the country, though heavily afflicted, is not yet to be despaired of, distinguished as she is, by so many characters of the highest class. Thus he would say, and I do not deny, that the event might justify his skill in prognostics. God works by means, and in a case of great national perplexity and distress, wisdom and political ability seem to be the only natural means of deliverance. But a mind more religiously inclined, and perhaps a little tinctured with melancholy, might with equal probability of success, hazard a conjecture directly opposite.—Alas! what is the wisdom of man, especially when he trusts in it as the only God of his confidence?—When I consider the general contempt that is poured upon all things sacred, the profusion, the dissipation, the knavish cunning of some, the rapacity of others, and the impenitence of all, I am rather inclined to fear that God, who honours himself by bringing human glory to shame, and by disappointing the expectations of those, whose trust is in creatures, has signalized the present day as a day of much human sufficiency and strength, has brought together from all quarters of the land, the most illustrious men to be found in it, only that he may prove the vanity of idols, and that when a great empire is falling, and he has pronounced a sentence of ruin against it, the inhabitants, be they weak or strong, wise or foolish, must fall with it. I am rather confirmed in this persuasion, by observing that these luminaries of the state, had no sooner fixed themselves in the political heaven, than the fall of the brightest of them shook all the rest. The arch of their power was no sooner struck, than the key-stone slipt out of its place, those, that were closest in connexion with it followed, and the whole building, new as it is, seems to be already a ruin. —If a man should hold this language, who could convict him of absurdity? The Marquis of Rockingham is minister —all the world rejoices, anticipating success in war, and a glorious peace.—The Marquis of Rockingham is dead—all the world is afflicted, and relapses into its former despondence.—What does this prove, but that the Marquis was their Almighty, and that now he is gone, they know no other? But let us wait a little, they will find another.—Perhaps the Duke of Portland, or perhaps the unpopular ——, whom they now represent as a devil, may obtain that honour. Thus God is forgot, and when he is, his judgments are generally his remembrancers.

How shall I comfort you upon the subject of your present distress? Pardon me that I find myself obliged to smile at it, because who but yourself would be distressed upon such an occasion? You have behaved politely, and like a gentleman, you have hospitably offered your house to a stranger, who could not, in your neighbourhood at least, have been comfortably accommodated any where

else. He by neither refusing nor accepting an offer, that did him too much honour, has disgraced himself, but not you. I think for the future, you must be more cautious of laying yourself open to a stranger, and never again expose yourself to incivilities from an archdeacon you are not acquainted with.

Though I did not mention it, I felt with you what you suffered by the loss of Miss ——, I was only silent because I could minister no consolation to you on such a subject, but what I knew your mind to be already stored with. Indeed the application of comfort in such cases, is a nice business, and perhaps when best managed, might as well be let alone. I remember reading many years ago, a long treatise on the subject of consolation, written in French, the author's name I forgot, but I wrote these words in the margin.—Special consolation! at least for a Frenchman, who is a creature the most easily comforted of any in the world!

We are as happy in Lady Austen, and she in us, as ever—having a lively imagination, and being passionately desirous of consolidating all into one family (for she has taken her leave of London) she has just sprung a project which serves, at least, to amuse us, and to make us laugh—it is to hire Mr. Small's house, on the top of Clifton hill, which is large, commodious, and handsome, will hold us conveniently, and any friends who may occasionally favour us with a visit —the house is furnished, but, if it can be hired without the furniture, will let for a trifle—your sentiments if you please upon this *demarche!*

I send you my last frank—our best love attends you individually, and altogether. I give you joy of a happy change in the season, and myself also. I have filled four sides in less time than two would have cost me a week ago—such is the effect of sunshine upon such a butterfly as I am. Yours.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the same.

My dear Friend, Aug. 3, 1782.

ENTERTAINING some hope, that Mr. Newton's next letter would furnish me with the means of satisfying your enquiry on the subject of Dr. Johnson's opinion, I have till now delayed my answer to your last; but the information is not yet come, Mr. Newton having intermitted a week more than usual, since his last writing. When I receive it, favourable or not, it shall be communicated to you, but I am not over sanguine in my expectations from that quarter. Very learned, and very critical heads, are hard to please. He may perhaps treat me with lenity for the sake of the subject and design, but the composition, I think, will hardly escape his censure. But though all doctors may not be of the same mind, there is one doctor at least, whom I have lately discovered, my professed admirer. He too, like Johnson, was with difficulty persuaded to read, having an aversion to all poetry, except the Night-Thoughts, which on a certain occasion, when being confined on board a ship, he had no other employment, he got by heart. He was however prevailed upon, and read me several times over, so that if my volume had sailed with him, instead of Doctor Young's, I perhaps might have occupied that shelf in his memory, which he then allotted to the Doctor.

It is a sort of paradox, but it is true: We are never more in danger than when we think ourselves most secure, nor in reality more secure, than when we seem to be most in danger. Both sides of this apparent contradiction were lately verified in my experience—passing from the green-house to the barn, I saw three kittens (for we have so many in our retinue) looking with fixt attention on something, which lay on the threshold of a door nailed up. I took but little notice of them at first, but a loud hiss engaged me to attend more closely, when behold—a viper! the largest that I remember to have seen, rearing itself, darting its forked tongue, and ejaculating the aforesaid hiss at the nose of a kitten, almost in contact with his lips. I ran into the hall for a hoe with a long handle, with which I intended to assail him, and returning in a few seconds missed him: he was gone, and I feared had escaped me. Still however the kitten sat watching immoveably on the same spot. I concluded therefore, that sliding between the door and the threshold, he had found his way out of the garden into the yard.

—I

—I went round immediately, and there found him in close conversation with the old cat, whose curiosity being excited by so novel an appearance, inclined her to pat his head repeatedly with her fore-foot, with her claws however sheathed, and not in anger, but in the way of philosophic enquiry and examination. To prevent her falling a victim to so laudable an exercise of her talents, I interposed in a moment with the hoe, and performed upon him an act of decapitation, which though not immediately mortal, proved so in the end. Had he slid into the passages, where it is dark, or had he, when in the yard, met with no interruption from the cat, and secreted himself in any of the out-houses, it is hardly possible but that some of the family must have been bitten; he might have been trodden upon without being perceived, and have slipped away before the sufferer could have distinguished what foe had wounded him. Three years ago we discovered one in the same place, which the barber slew with a trowel.

Our proposed removal to Mr. Small's, was, as you may suppose, a jest, or rather a joco-serious matter. We never looked upon it as entirely feasible, yet we saw in it something so like practicability, that we did not esteem it altogether unworthy of our attention. It was one of those projects, which people of lively imaginations play with, and admire for a few days, and then break in pieces. Lady Austen returned on Thursday from London, where she spent the last fortnight, and whither she was called by an unexpected opportunity to dispose of the remainder of her lease. She has therefore no longer any connexion with the great city, and no house but at Olney. Her abode is to be at the vicarage, where she has hired as much room as she wants, which she will embellish with her own furniture, and which she will occupy as soon as the minister's wife has produced another child, which is expected to make its entry in October.

Mr. Bull, a dissenting minister of Newport, a learned, ingenious, good-natured, pious friend of ours, who sometimes visits us, and whom we visited last week, has put into my hands three volumes of French poetry, composed by Madame Guion—a quietist, say you, and fanatic. I will have nothing to do with her—Tis very well, you are welcome to have nothing to do with her, but in the mean time her verse is the only French verse I ever read that I found agreeable; there is a neatness in it equal to that which we applaud with so much reason, in the compositions of Prior. I have translated several of them, and shall proceed in my translations, till I have filled a Lilliputian paper-book I happen to have by me, which when filled, I shall present to Mr. Bull. He is her passionate admirer; rode twenty miles to see her picture in the house of a stranger, which stranger politely insisted on his acceptance of it, and it now hangs over his chimney. It is a striking portrait, too characteristic not to be a strong resemblance, and were it encompassed with a glory, instead of being dressed in a nun's hood, might pass for the face of an angel. Yours.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the same.

My dear William, Nov. 13, 1782.

On the part of the poor, and on our part, be pleased to make acknowledgments, such as the occasion calls for, to our beneficial friend Mr. ——. I call him ours, because having experienced his kindness to myself, in a former instance, and in the present, his disinterested readiness to succour the distressed, my ambition will be satisfied with nothing less. He may depend upon the strictest secrecy; no creature shall hear him mentioned, either now or hereafter, as the person from whom we have received this bounty. But when I speak of him, or hear him spoken of by others, which sometimes happens, I shall not forget what is due to so rare a character. I wish, and your mother wishes it too, that he could sometimes take us in his way to ——; he will find us happy to receive a person whom we must needs account it an honour to know. We shall exercise our best discretion in the disposal of the money, but in this town where the gospel has been preached so many years, where the people have been favoured so long with laborious and conscientious ministers, it is not an easy thing to find those who make no profession of religion at all, and are yet proper objects of charity. The profane are so profane, so drunken, dissolute, and in every respect

worthless, that to make them partakers of his bounty, would be to abuse it.—We promise however that none shall touch it, but such as are miserably poor, yet at the same time industrious and honest, two characters frequently united here, where the most watchful and unremitting labour will hardly procure them bread. We make none but the cheapest laces, and the price of them is fallen almost to nothing. Thanks are due to yourself likewise, and are hereby accordingly rendered, for waving your claim in behalf of your own parishioners. You are always with them, and they are always, at least some of them, the better for your residence among them. Olney is a populous place, inhabited chiefly by the half-starved and the ragged of the earth, and it is not possible for our small party, and small ability, to extend their operations so far as to be much felt among such numbers. Accept therefore your share of their gratitude, and be convinced, that when they pray for a blessing upon those who relieved their wants, He that answers that prayer, and when he answers it, will remember his servant at Stock.

I little thought when I was writing the history of John Gilpin, that he would appear in print—I intended to laugh, and to make two or three others laugh of whom you were one. But now all the world laugh, at least if they have the same relish for a tale ridiculous in itself, and quaintly told, as we have.—Well—they do not always laugh so innocently, and at so small an expence—for in a world like this, abounding with subjects for satire, and with satirical wits to mark them, a laugh that hurts nobody, has at least the grace of novelty to recommend it. Swift's darling motto was, *Vive la bagatelle*—a good wish for a philosopher of his complexion, the greater part of whose wisdom, whencesoever it came, most certainly came not from above. *La bagatelle* has no enemy in me, though it has neither so warm a friend, nor so able a one, as it had in him. If I trifle, and merely trifle, it is because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy that nothing else so effectually disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote, have been written in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood, perhaps had never been written at all.

I hear from Mrs. Newton, that some great persons have spoken with great approbation of a certain book—Who they are, and what they have said, I am to be told in a future letter. The Monthly Reviewers in the mean time have satisfied me well enough. Yours, my dear William.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

My dear Friend, Feb. 13, 1783.

In writing to you I never want a subject. Self is always at hand, and self, with its concerns, is always interesting to a friend.

You may think perhaps that having commenced poet by profession, I am always writing verses. Not so—I have written nothing, at least finished nothing, since I published— except a certain facetious history of John Gilpin, which Mrs. Unwin would send to the Public Advertiser: perhaps you might read it without suspecting the author.

My book procures me favours, which my modesty will not permit me to specify, except one, which, modest as I am, I cannot suppress—a very handsome letter from Dr. Franklin at Passy. These fruits it has brought me.

I have been refreshing myself with a walk in the garden, where I find that January (who according to Chaucer was the husband of May) being dead, February has married the widow. Yours.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, April 5, 1783.

When one has a letter to write, there is nothing more useful than to make a beginning. In the first place, because unless it be begun, there is no good reason to hope it will ever be ended; and secondly, because the beginning is half the business, it being much more difficult to put the pen in motion at first, than to continue the progress of it, when once moved.

Mrs. C——'s illness, likely to prove mortal, and seizing her at such a time, has excited much compassion in my breast,

breast, and in Mrs. Unwin's, both for her and her daughter. To have parted with a child she loves so much, intending soon to follow her; to find herself arrested before she could set out, and at so great a distance from her most valued relations, her daughter's life too threatened by a disorder not often curable, are circumstances truly affecting. She has indeed much natural fortitude, and to make her condition still more tolerable, a good christian hope for her support. But so it is, that the distresses of those who least need our pity, excite it most; the amiableness of the character engages our sympathy, and we mourn for persons for whom perhaps we might more reasonably rejoice. There is still however a possibility that she may recover; an event we *must* wish for, though for her to depart would be far better. Thus we would always withhold from the skies those who alone can reach them, at least till we are ready to bear them company.

Present our love, if you please, to Miss C——. I saw in the Gentleman's Magazine for last month, an account of a physician, who has discovered a new method of treating consumptive cases, which has succeeded wonderfully in the trial. He finds the seat of the distemper in the stomach, and cures it principally by emetics. The old method of encountering the disorder has proved so unequal to the task, that I should be much inclined to any new practice that comes well recommended. He is spoken of as a sensible and judicious man, but his name I have forgot.

Our love to all under your roof, and in particular to Miss Catlett, if she is with you. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XL.

To the same.

May 31, 1783.

We rather rejoice than mourn with you on the occasion of Mrs. C——'s death. In the case of believers, death has lost his sting, not only with respect to those he takes away, but with respect to survivors also. Nature, indeed, will always suggest some causes of sorrow, when an amiable and christian friend departs, but the scripture, so many more, and so much more important reasons to rejoice, that on such occasions, perhaps more remarkably than on any other, sorrow is turned into joy. The law of our land is affronted if we say the king dies, and insists on it that he only demises. This, which is a fiction, where a monarch only is in question, in the case of a christian, is reality and truth. He only lays aside a body, which it is his privilege to be incumbered with no longer; and instead of dying, in that moment he begins to live. But this the world does not understand, therefore the kings of it must go on demising to the end of the chapter.

LETTER XLI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, June 8, 1783.

Our severest winter, commonly called the spring, is now over, and I find myself seated in my favourite recess, the green-house. In such a situation, so silent, so shady, where no human foot is heard, and where only my myrtles presume to peep in at the window, you may suppose I have no interruption to complain of, and that my thoughts are perfectly at my command. But the beauties of the spot are themselves an interruption, my attention being called upon by those very myrtles, by a double row of grass pinks just beginning to blossom, and by a bed of beans already in bloom; and you are to consider it, if you please, as no small proof of my regard, that though you have so many powerful rivals, I disengage myself from them all, and devote this hour entirely to you.

You are not acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Bull of Newport, perhaps it is as well for you that you are not. You would regret still more than you do, that there are so many miles interposed between us. He spends part of the day with us to-morrow. A dissenter, but a liberal one; a man of letters, and of genius; master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it; an imagination, which when he finds himself in the company he loves, and can confide in, runs away with him into such fields of speculation, as amuse and enliven every other imagination that has the happiness to be of the party! at other times he has a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition, not less agreeable in its way. No men are better qualified for companions in such a world as this, than

men of such a temperament. Every scene of life has two sides, a dark and a bright one, and the mind that has an equal mixture of melancholy and vivacity, is best of all qualified for the contemplation of either. He can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. Such a man is Mr. Bull. But —he smokes tobacco—nothing is perfect—

Nihil est ab omni
Parte beatum.

On the other side I send you a something, a song if you please, composed last Thursday—the incident happened the day before.* Yours,

LETTER XLII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, July 27, 1783.

You cannot have more pleasure in receiving a letter from me, than I should find in writing it, were it not almost impossible in such a place to find a subject.

I live in a world abounding with incidents, upon which many grave, and perhaps some profitable observations might be made: but those incidents never reaching my unfortunate ears, both the entertaining narrative, and the reflection it might suggest, are to me annihilated and lost. I look back to the past week, and say, what did it produce? I ask the same question of the week preceding, and duly receive the same answer from both—nothing!—A situation like this, in which I am as unknown to the world, as I am ignorant of all that passes in it, in which I have nothing to do but to think, would exactly suit me, were my subjects of meditation as agreeable as my leisure is uninterrupted: my passion for retirement is not at all abated, after so many years spent in the most sequestered state, but rather increased. A circumstance, I should esteem wonderful to a degree not to be accounted for, considering the condition of my mind, did I not know that we think as we are made to think, and of course approve and prefer, as Providence, who appoints the bounds of our habitation, chuses for us. Thus I am both free and a prisoner at the same time. The world is before me; I am not shut up in the Bastile; there are no moats about my castle, no locks upon my gates, of which I have not the key—but an invisible, uncontrollable agency, a local attachment, an inclination more forcible than I ever felt even to the place of my birth, serves me for prison walls, and for bounds which I cannot pass. In former years I have known sorrow, and before I had ever tasted of spiritual trouble. The effect was an abhorrence of the scene in which I had suffered so much, and a weariness of those objects which I had so long looked at with an eye of despondency and dejection. But it is otherwise with me now. The same cause subsisting, and in a much more powerful degree, fails to produce its natural effect. The very stones in the garden walls are my intimate acquaintance. I should miss almost the minutest object, and be disagreeably affected by its removal, and am persuaded, that were it possible I could leave this incommodious nook for a twelvemonth, I should return to it again with rapture, and be transported with the sight of objects, which to all the world beside, would be at least indifferent; some of them perhaps, such as the ragged thatch, and the tottering walls of the neighbouring cottages, disgusting. But so it is, and it is so, because here is to be my abode, and because such is the appointment of Him that placed me in it.

Iste terrarum mihi præter omnes
Angulus ridet,

It is the place of all the world I love the most, not for any happiness it affords me, but because here I can be miserable with most convenience to myself and with the least disturbance to others.

You wonder, and (I dare say) unfeignedly, because you do not think yourself entitled to such praise, that I prefer your style, as an historian, to that of the two most renowned writers of history the present day has seen. That you may not suspect me of having said more than my real opinion will warrant, I will tell you why. In your style I see no affectation. In every line of theirs I see nothing else. They disgust me always, Robertson with his pomp and his strut, and Gibbon with his finical and French manners. You are as correct as they. You

* He had followed his song of the Rose.

You express yourself with as much precision. Your words are ranged with as much propriety, but you do not set your periods to a tune. They discover a perpetual desire to exhibit themselves to advantage, whereas your subject engrosses you. They sing, and you say; which, as history is a thing to be said, and not sung, is, in my judgment, very much to your advantage. A writer that despises their tricks, and is yet neither inelegant nor inharmonious, proves himself, by that single circumstance, a man of superior judgment and ability to them both. You have my reasons. I honour a manly character, in which good sense, and a desire of doing good, are the predominant features—but affectation is an emetic.

LETTER XLIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

Aug. 4, 1783.

My dear William, I feel myself sensibly obliged by the interest you take in the success of my productions. Your feelings upon the subject, are such as I should have myself, had I an opportunity of calling Johnson aside to make the enquiry you propose. But I am pretty well prepared for the worst, and so long as I have the opinion of a few capable judges in my favour, and am thereby convinced that I have neither disgraced myself nor my subject, shall not feel myself disposed to any extreme anxiety about the sale. To aim, with success, at the spiritual good of mankind, and to become popular by writing on scriptural subjects, were an unreasonable ambition, even for a poet to entertain in days like these. Verse may have many charms, but has none powerful enough to conquer the aversion of a dissipated age to such instruction. Ask the question therefore boldly, and be not mortified, even though he should shake his head, and drop his chin; for it is no more than we have reason to expect. We will lay the fault upon the vice of the times, and we will acquit the poet.

I am glad you were pleased with my Latin ode, and indeed with my English dirge as much as I was myself. The tune laid me under a disadvantage, obliging me to write in Alexandrines; which, I suppose, would suit no ear, but a French one; neither did I intend any thing more than that the subject, and the words, should be sufficiently accommodated to the music. The ballad is a species of poetry, I believe, peculiar to this country, equally adapted to the drollest, and the most tragical subjects. Simplicity and ease are its proper characteristics. Our forefathers excelled in it; but we moderns, have lost the art. It is observed, that we have few good English odes. But to make amends, we have many excellent ballads, not inferior perhaps in true poetical merit to some of the very best odes, that the Greek or Latin languages have to boast of. It is a sort of composition I was ever fond of, and if graver matters had not called me another way, should have addicted myself to it more than to any other. I inherit a taste for it from my father, who succeeded well in it himself, and who lived at a time when the best pieces in that way were produced. What can be prettier than Gay's ballad, or rather Swift's, Arbuthnot's, Pope's, and Gay's, in the What do you call it—"'Twas when the "seas were roaring." I have been well informed, that they all contributed, and that the most celebrated association of clever fellows, this country ever saw, did not think it beneath them to unite their strength and abilities in the composition of a song. The success however answered their wishes. The ballads that Bourne has translated, beautiful in themselves, are still more beautiful in his version of them, infinitely surpassing in my judgment, all that Ovid or Tibullus have left behind them. They are quite as elegant, and far more touching and pathetic, than the tenderest strokes of either.

So much for ballads, and ballad writers—"A worthy subject," you will say, "for a man, whose head might be filled "with better things;"—and it is filled with better things, but to so ill a purpose, that I thrust into it all manner of topics, that may prove more amusing; as for instance, I have two goldfinches, which in the summer occupy the green house. A few days since, being employed in cleaning out their cages, I placed that which I had in hand upon the table, while the other hung against the wall: the windows and the doors stood wide open. I went to fill the fountain at the pump, and on my return, was not a little surprised to find a goldfinch sitting on

the top of the cage I had been cleaning, and singing to, and kissing the goldfinch within. I approached him; and he discovered no fear; still nearer, and he discovered none. I advanced my hand towards him, and he took no notice of it. I seized him, and supposed I had caught a new bird, but casting my eye upon the other cage, perceived my mistake. Its inhabitant, during my absence, had contrived to find an opening, where the wire had been a little bent, and made no other use of the escape it had afforded him, than to salute his friend, and to converse with him more intimately than he had done before. I returned him to his proper mansion, but in vain. In less than a minute, he had thrust his little person through the aperture again, and again perched upon his neighbour's cage, kissing as at the first, and singing, as if transported with the fortunate adventure. I could not but respect such friendship, as for the sake of its gratification, had twice declined an opportunity to be free, and, consenting to their union, resolved, that for the future, one cage should hold them both. I am glad of such incidents. For at a pinch, and when I need entertainment, the versification of them serves to divert me.

I transcribe for you a piece of Madam Guion, not as the best, but as being shorter than many, and as good as most of them. Yours ever.

LETTER XLIV.

To the same.

My dear William, Sept. 29, 1783.

We are sorry that you and your household partake so largely of the ill effects of this unhealthy season. You are happy however in having hitherto escaped the epidemic fever, which has prevailed much in this part of the kingdom, and carried many off. Your mother and I are well. After more than a fortnight's indisposition, which slight appellation is quite adequate to the description of all I suffered, I am at length restored by a grain or two of emetic tartar. It is a tax I generally pay in autumn. By this time, I hope, a purer ether than we have seen for months, and these brighter suns than the summer had to boast, have cheered your spirits, and made your existence more comfortable. We are rational. But we are animal too, and therefore subject to the influences of the weather. The cattle in the fields show evident symptoms of lassitude and disgust, in an unpleasant season; and we, their lords and masters, are constrained to sympathize with them: the only difference between us is, that they know not the cause of their dejection, and we do, but, for our humiliation, are equally at a loss to cure it. Upon this account I have sometimes wished myself a philosopher. How happy, in comparison with myself, does the sagacious investigator of nature seem, whose fancy is ever employed in the invention of *hypotheses*, and his reason in the support of them! While he is accounting for the origin of the winds, he has no leisure to attend to their influence upon himself—and, while he considers what the sun is made of, forgets that he has not shone for a month. One project indeed supplants another. The *vortices* of Descartes, gave way to the gravitation of Newton, and this again is threatened by the electrical fluid of a modern. One generation blows bubbles, and the next breaks them. But in the mean time your philosopher is a happy man. He escapes a thousand inquietudes, to which the indolent are subject, and finds his occupation, whether it be the pursuit of a butterfly, or a demonstration, the wholsomest exercise in the world. As he proceeds, he applauds himself. His discoveries, though eventfully perhaps they prove but dreams, are to him realities. The world gaze at him, as he does at new phenomena in the heavens, and perhaps understand him as little. But this does not prevent their praises, nor at all disturb him in the enjoyment of that self-complacence, to which his imaginary success entitles him. He wears his honours while he lives, and if another strips them off when he has been dead a century, it is no great matter; he can then make shift without them.

I have said a great deal upon this subject, and know not what it all amounts to. I did not intend a syllable of it when I began. But *currente calamo*, I stumbled upon it. My end is to amuse myself and you. The former of these two points is secured. I shall be happy if I do not miss the latter.

By the way, what is your opinion of these

these air-balloons? I am quite charmed with the discovery. Is it not possible (do you suppose?) to convey such a quantity of inflammable air into the stomach, and abdomen, that the philosopher, no longer gravitating to a centre, shall ascend by his own comparative levity, and never stop till he has reached the medium, exactly *in equilibrio* with himself? May he not, by the help of a pasteboard rudder, attached to his posteriors, steer himself in that purer element with ease, and again by a slow and gradual discharge of his aerial contents, recover his former tendency to the earth, and descend without the smallest danger or inconvenience? These things are worth enquiry, and (I dare say) they will be enquired after as they deserve: The *pennæ non homini datæ*, are likely to be less regretted than they were; and perhaps a flight of academicians, and a covey of fine ladies, may be no uncommon spectacle in the next generation. A letter which appeared in the public prints last week, convinces me that the learned are not without hopes of some such improvement upon this discovery. The author is a sensible and ingenious man, and under a reasonable apprehension that the ignorant may feel themselves inclined to laugh upon a subject, that affects himself with the utmost seriousness, with much good manners, and management, bespeaks their patience, suggesting many good consequences, that may result from a course of experiments upon this machine, and amongst others, that it may be of use in ascertaining the shape of continents and islands, and the face of wide-extended and far distant countries, an end not to be hoped for, unless by these means of extraordinary elevation, the human prospect may be immensely enlarged, and the philosopher, exalted to the skies, attain a view of the whole hemisphere at once. But whether he is to ascend by the mere inflation of his person, as hinted above, or whether in a sort of band-box, supported upon balloons, is not yet apparent, nor (I suppose) even in his own idea perfectly decided. Yours, my dear William,

LETTER XLV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, Oct. 6, 1783.

It is indeed a melancholy consideration, that the gospel, whose direct tendency is to promote the happiness of mankind, in the present, as well as in the life to come, and which so effectually answers the design of its author, whenever it is well understood and sincerely believed, should, through the ignorance, the bigotry, the superstition of its professors, and the ambition of popes, and princes, the tools of popes, have produced incidently so much mischief; only furnishing the world with a plausible excuse to worry each other, while they sanctified the worst cause with the specious pretext of zeal for the furtherance of the best.

Angels descend from heaven to publish peace between man and his Maker —the Prince of Peace himself comes to confirm and establish it, and war, hatred, and desolation, are the consequence. Thousands quarrel about the interpretation of a book, which none of them understand. He that is slain, dies firmly persuaded that the crown of martyrdom expects him, and he that slew him, is equally convinced that he has done God service. In reality, they are both mistaken, and equally unentitled to the honour they arrogate to themselves. If a multitude of blind men should set out for a certain city, and dispute about the right road till a battle ensued between them, the probable effect would be that none of them would ever reach it; and such a fray, preposterous and shocking in the extreme, would exhibit a picture in some degree resembling the original of which we have been speaking. And why is not the world thus occupied at present? even because they have exchanged a zeal that was no better than madness, for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The holy sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations, called christian, not because the light of true wisdom has delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world. The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy,

tosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding, but together with the delusion they have lost the substance, and for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here then we see the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non essentials, but with respect to that in which the essence of christianity consists, leaves it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors that in different ages have disgraced the faith, but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion. Why those evils have been permitted shall be known hereafter. One thing in the mean time is certain; that the folly and frenzy of the professed disciples of the gospel, have been more dangerous to its interests, than all the avowed hostilities of its adversaries, and perhaps for this cause, these mischiefs might be suffered to prevail for a season, that its divine original and nature might be the more illustrated, when it should appear that it was able to stand its ground for ages against that most formidable of all attacks, the indiscretion of its friends. The outrages that have followed this perversion of the truth, have proved indeed a stumbling block to individuals; the wise of this world, with all their wisdom, have not been able to distinguish between the blessing and abuse of it. Voltaire was offended, and Gibbon has turned his back, but the flock of Christ is still nourished, and still increases, notwithstanding the unbelief of a philosopher is able to convert bread into a stone, and a fish into a serpent.

I am much obliged to you for the voyages which I received, and began to read last night. My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators, in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor: my main-sail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian, and all this without moving from the fire-side. The principal fruits of these circuits, that have been made around the globe, seem likely to be the amusement of those that staid at home. Discoveries have been made, but such discoveries will hardly satisfy the expence of such undertakings. We brought away an Indian, and having debauched him, we sent him home again to communicate the infection to his country—fine sport to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread-fruit, and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future. So much the better for them; their poverty is indeed their mercy. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER XLVI.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

Oct. 26, 1783.

I should not have been thus long silent, had I known with certainty where a letter of mine might find you. Your summer excursions however are now at an end, and addressing a line to you in the centre of the busy scene, in which you spend your winter, I am pretty sure of my mark.

I see the winter approaching without much concern, though a passionate lover of fine weather, and the pleasant scenes of summer; but the long evenings have their comforts too, and there is hardly to be found upon earth, I suppose, so snug a creature as an Englishman by his fire-side in the winter. I mean however an Englishman that lives in the country, for in London it is not very easy to avoid intrusion. I have two ladies to read to, sometimes more, but never less—at present we are circumnavigating the globe, and I find the old story with which I amused myself some years since, through the great felicity of a memory not very retentive, almost new. I am however sadly at a loss for Cooke's voyage, can you send it? I shall be glad of Foster's too. These together will make the winter pass merrily, and you will much oblige me.

LETTER XLVII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, Nov. 10, 1783.

I have lost, and wasted, almost all my writing time, in making an alteration in the verses I either inclose, or subjoin, for I know not which will be the case at present. If prose comes readily, I shall trans-

transcribe them on another sheet, otherwise on this. You will understand, before you have read many of them, that they are not for the press. I lay you under no other injunctions. The unkind behaviour of our acquaintance, though it is possible, that in some instances, it may not much affect our happiness, nor engage many of our thoughts, will sometimes obtrude itself upon us with a degree of importunity, not easily resisted, and then perhaps, though almost insensible of it before, we feel more than the occasion will justify. In such a moment it was, that I conceived this poem, and gave loose to a degree of resentment which perhaps I ought not to have indulged, but which in a cooler hour I cannot altogether condemn. My former intimacy with the two characters was such, that I could not but feel myself provoked by the neglect with which they both treated me on a late occasion. So much by way of preface.

You ought not to have supposed, that if you had visited us last summer, the pleasure of the interview would have been all your own. By such an imagination you wrong both yourself and us. Do you suppose we do not love you? You cannot suspect your mother of coldness, and as to me, assure yourself I have no friend in the world with whom I communicate without the least reserve, yourself excepted. Take heart then, and when you find a favourable opportunity to come, assure yourself of such a welcome from us both, as you have a right to look for. But I have observed in your two last letters, somewhat of a dejection and melancholy, that I am afraid you do not sufficiently strive against. I suspect you of being too sedentary. "You "cannot walk." Why you cannot is best known to yourself. I am sure your legs are long enough, and your person does not overload them. But I beseech you ride, and ride often. I think I have heard you say you cannot even do that without an object. Is not health an object? Is not a new prospect, which in most countries is gained at the end of every mile, an object? Assure yourself that easy chairs are no friends to cheerfulness, and that a long winter, spent by the fire-side, is a prelude to an unhealthy spring. Every thing I see in the fields, is to me an object, and I can look at the same rivulet, or at a handsome tree, every day of my life, with new pleasure. This indeed is partly the effect of a natural taste for rural beauty, and partly the effect of habit, for I never in all my life have let slip the opportunity of breathing fresh air, and conversing with nature, when I could fairly catch it. I earnestly recommend a cultivation of the same taste to you, suspecting that you have neglected it, and suffer for doing so.

LETTER XLVIII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, Nov. 24, 1785.

An evening unexpectedly retired, and which your mother and I spend without company, (an occurrence far from frequent) affords me a favourable opportunity to write by to-morrow's post, which else I could not have found. You are very good to consider my literary necessities with so much attention, and I feel proportionably grateful. Blair's Lectures, (though I suppose they must make a part of my private studies, not being *ad captum fœminarum*) will be perfectly welcome. You say you felt my verses. I assure you that in this you followed my example, for I felt them first. A man's lordship is nothing to me, any farther than in connexion with qualities that entitle him to my respect. If he thinks himself privileged by it, to treat me with neglect, I am his humble servant, and shall never be at a loss to render him an equivalent. I will not however belie my knowledge of mankind so much, as to seem surprised at a treatment which I had abundant reason to expect. To these men with whom I was once intimate, and for many years, I am no longer necessary, no longer convenient, or in any respect an object. They think of me as of the man in the moon, and whether I have a lantern, or a dog and faggot, or whether I have neither of those desirable accommodations, is to them a matter of perfect indifference: upon that point we are agreed, our indifference is mutual, and were I to publish again, which is not possible, I should give them a proof of it.

L'Estrange's Josephus has lately furnished us with evening lectures. But the historian is so tediously circumstantial, and the translator so insupportably

coarse and vulgar, that we are all three weary of him. How would Tacitus have shone upon such a subject, great master as he was of the art of description, concise without obscurity, and affecting without being poetical. But so it was ordered, and for wise reasons no doubt, that the greatest calamities any people ever suffered, and an accomplishment of one of the most signal prophecies in the scripture, should be recorded by one of the worst writers. The man was a temporizer too, and courted the favour of his Roman masters, at the expence of his own creed, or else an infidel, and absolutely disbelieved it. You will think me very difficult to please, I quarrel with Josephus for the want of elegance, and with some of our modern historians for having too much. With him, for running right forward like a gazette, without stopping to make a single observation by the way, and with them for pretending to delineate characters, that existed two thousand years ago, and to discover the motives by which they were influenced, with the same precision as if they had been their contemporaries.—Simplicity is become a very rare quality in a writer. In the decline of great kingdoms, and where refinement in all the arts is carried to an excess, I suppose it is always rare. The latter Roman writers are remarkable for false ornament, they were yet no doubt admired by the readers of their own day; and with respect to authors of the present æra, the most popular among them appear to me equally censurable on the same account. Swift and Addison were simple.

Your mother wants room for a postscript, so my lecture must conclude abruptly. Yours.

LETTER XLIX.

To the same.

My dear Friend,

It is hard upon us striplings, who have uncles still living (N. B. I myself have an uncle still alive) that those venerable gentlemen should stand in our way, even when the ladies are in question; that I, for instance, should find in one page of your letter, a hope, that Miss Shuttleworth would be of your party, and be told in your next, that she is engaged to your uncle. Well, we may perhaps never be uncles, but we may reasonably hope that the time is coming, when others, as young as we are now, shall envy us the privileges of old age, and see us engross that share in the attention of the ladies, to which their youth must aspire in vain. Make our compliments if you please to your sister Eliza, and tell her that we are both mortified at having missed the pleasure of seeing her.

Balloons are so much the mode, that even in this country we have attempted a balloon. You may possibly remember that at a place called Weston, a little more than a mile from Olney, there lives a family, whose name is Throckmorton. The present possessor is a young man whom I remember a boy. He has a wife, who is young, genteel, and handsome. They are Papists, but much more amiable than many Protestants. We never had any intercourse with the family, though ever since we lived here, we have enjoyed the range of their pleasure-grounds, having been favoured with a key, which admits us into all. When this man succeeded to the estate, on the death of his elder brother, and came to settle at Weston, I sent him a complimentary card, requesting the continuance of that privilege, having till then enjoyed it, by favour of his mother, who on that occasion went to finish her days at Bath. You may conclude that he granted it, and for about two years nothing more passed between us. A fortnight ago, I received an invitation in the civilest terms, in which he told me, that the next day he should attempt to fill a balloon, and if it would be any pleasure to me to be present, should be happy to see me. Your mother and I went. The whole country were there, but the balloon could not be filled. The endeavour was, I believe, very philosophically made, but such a process depends for its success upon such niceties as make it very precarious. Our reception was however flattering to a great degree, insomuch, that more notice seemed to be taken of us, than we could possibly have expected, indeed rather more than any of his other guests. They even seemed anxious to recommend themselves to our regards. We drank chocolate, and were asked to dine, but were engaged. A day or two afterwards, Mrs. Unwin and I walked that way, and were overtaken in a shower.

I found a tree, that I thought would shelter us both, a large elm, in a grove, that fronts the mansion. Mrs. T. observed us, and running towards us in the rain, insisted on our walking in. He was gone out. We sat chatting with her till the weather cleared up, and then at her instance took a walk with her in the garden. The garden is almost their only walk, and is certainly the only retreat in which they are not liable to interruption. She offered us a key of it, in a manner that made it impossible not to accept it, and said she would send us one; a few days afterwards in the cool of the evening, we walked that way again. We saw them going toward the house, and exchanged bows and curtsies at a distance, but did not join them. In a few minutes, when we had passed the house, and had almost reached the gate that opens out of the park into the adjoining field, I heard the iron gate belonging to the court yard ring, and saw Mr. T. advancing hastily toward us, we made equal haste to meet him; he presented to us the key, which I told him I esteemed a singular favour, and after a few such speeches as are made on such occasions, we parted. This happened about a week ago. I concluded nothing less than that all this civility, and attention, was designed on their part, as a prelude to a nearer acquaintance; but here at present the matter rests. I should like exceedingly to be on an easy footing there, to give a morning call now and then, and to receive one, but nothing more. For though he is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, I could not wish to visit him in any other way; neither our house, furniture, servants, or income, being such as qualify us to make entertainments, neither would I on any account be introduced to the neighbouring gentry. Mr. T. is altogether a man of fashion, and respectable on every account.

I have told you a long story. Farewell. We number the days as they pass, and are glad that we shall see you and your sister soon. Yours, &c.

LETTER L.

To the same.

My dear William, Jan. 3, 1784.

YOUR silence began to be distressing to both your mother and me, and had I not received a letter from you last night, I should have written by this post to enquire after your health. How can it be, that you, who are not stationary like me, but often change your situation, and mix with a variety of company, should suppose me furnished with such abundant materials, and yourself destitute. I assure you faithfully, that I do not find the soil of Olney prolific in the growth of such articles as make letter-writing a desirable employment. No place contributes less to the catalogue of incidents, or is more scantily supplied with anecdotes worth notice.

We have

One parson, one poet, one belman, one cryer,
And the poor poet is our only 'squire.

Guess then if I have not more reason to expect two letters from you, than you one from me. The principal occurrence, and that which affects me most at present, came to pass this moment. The stair-foot door being swelled by the thaw, would do any thing better than it would open. An attempt to force it upon that office has been attended with such a horrible dissolution of its parts, that we were immediately obliged to introduce a chirurgeon, commonly called a carpenter, whose applications we have some hope will cure it of a lock'd jaw, and heal its numerous fractures. His medicines are powerful chalybeates, and a certain glutinous salve, which he tells me is made of the tails and ears of animals. The consequences however are rather unfavourable to my present employment, which does not well brook noise, bustle, and interruption.

This being the case, I shall not perhaps be either so perspicuous, or so diffuse, on the subject of which you desire my sentiments, as I should be, but I will do my best. Know then, that I have learnt long since, of Abbé Raynal, to hate all monopolies, as injurious, howsoever managed, to the interests of commerce at large; consequently the charter in question would not, at any rate, be a favourite of mine. This however is of itself, I confess, no sufficient reason to justify the resumption of it. But such reasons I think are not wanting. A grant of that kind, it is well known, is always forfeited by the non-performance of the conditions. And why not equally forfeited

forfeited if those conditions are exceeded; if the design of it be perverted, and its operation extended to objects which were never in the contemplation of the donor? This appears to me to be no misrepresentation of their case, whose charter is supposed to be in danger. It constitutes them a trading company, and gives them an exclusive right to traffic in the East Indies. But it does no more. It invests them with no sovereignty; it does not convey to them the royal prerogative of making war and peace, which the king cannot alienate, if he would. But this prerogative they have exercised, and forgetting the terms of their institution, have possessed themselves of an immense territory, which they have ruled with a rod of iron, to which it is impossible they should even have a right, unless such a one as it is a disgrace to plead—the right of conquest. The potentates of this country they dash in pieces like a potter's vessel, as often as they please, making the happiness of thirty millions of mankind, a consideration subordinate to that of their own emolument, oppressing them as often as it may serve a lucrative purpose, and in no instance, that I have ever heard, consulting their interest or advantage. That government therefore is bound to interfere, and to un-king these tyrants, is to me self evident. And if having subjugated so much of this miserable world, it is therefore necessary that we must keep possession of it, it appears to me a duty so binding on the legislature to resume it from the hands of those usurpers, that I should think a curse, and a bitter one, must follow the neglect of it. But suppose this were done, can they be legally deprived of their charter? In truth I think so. If the abuse and perversion of a charter can amount to a defeasance of it, never were they so grossly palpable as in this instance; never was charter so justly forfeited. Neither am I at all afraid that such a measure should be drawn into a precedent, unless it could be alledged, as a sufficient reason for not hanging a rogue, that perhaps magistracy might grow wanton in the exercise of such a power, and now and then hang up an honest man for its amusement. When the governors of the bank shall have deserved the same severity I hope they will meet with it. In the mean time I do not think them a whit more in jeopardy because a corporation of plunderers have been brought to justice.

We are well, and love you all. I never wrote in such a hurry, nor in such disturbance. Pardon the effects, and believe me yours affectionately.

LETTER LI.

To the same.

My dear William, January 1, 1784.

WHEN I first resolved to write an answer to your last this evening, I had no thought of any thing more sublime than prose. But before I began, it occurred to me that perhaps you would not be displeased with an attempt to give a poetical translation of the lines you sent me. They are so beautiful, that I felt the temptation irresistible. At least, as the French say, it was *plus forte que moi;* and I accordingly complied. By this means I have lost an hour; and whether I shall be able to fill my sheet before supper, is as yet doubtful. But I will do my best.

For your remarks, I think them perfectly just. You have no reason to distrust your taste, or to submit the trial of it to me. You understand the use, and the force of language, as well as any man. You have quick feeling, and you are fond of poetry. How is it possible then that you should not be a judge of it. I venture to hazard only one alteration, which, as it appears to me, would amount to a little improvement. The seventh and eighth lines, I think, I should like better thus—

Aspirante levi zephyro et redeunte serenâ
Anni temperie fœcundo è cespite surgunt.

My reason is, that the word *cùm* is repeated too soon. At least my ear does not like it, and when it can be done without injury to the sense, there seems to me to be an elegance in diversifying the expression, as much as possible upon similar occasions. It discovers a command of phrase, and gives a more masterly air to the piece. If *extincta* stood unconnected with *tclis*, I should prefer your word *micant*, to the doctor's *vigent*. But the latter seems to stand more in direct opposition to that sort of extinction, which is effected by a shaft or arrow. In the day-time the stars may be said to die,

and

and in the night to recover their strength. Perhaps the doctor had in his eye, that noble line of Gray's—"*Hyperion's march* "*they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of war!*" But it is a beautiful composition. It is tender, touching, and elegant. It is not easy to do it justice in English.

Many thanks for the books, which being most admirably packed, came safe. They will furnish us with many a winter evening's amusement. We are glad, that you intend to be the carrier back.

We rejoice too, that your cousin has remembered you in her will. The money she left to those who attended her hearse, would have been better bestowed upon you: and by this time perhaps she thinks so. Alas! what an enquiry does that thought suggest, and how impossible to make it to any purpose! What are the employments of the departed spirit? and where does it subsist? Has it any cognizance of earthly things? Is it transported to an immeasurable distance; or is it still, though imperceptible to us, conversant with the same scene, and interested in what passes here? How little we know of a state to which we are all destined; and how does the obscurity, that hangs over that undiscovered country, increase the anxiety we sometimes feel as we are journeying towards it? It is sufficient however, for such as you, and a few more of my acquaintance to know, that in your separate state you will be happy. Provision is made for your reception; and you will have no cause to regret aught, that you have left behind.

I have written to Mr. ——. My letter went this morning. How I love, and honour, that man! For many reasons I dare not tell him, how much. But I hate the frigidity of the style, in which I am forced to address him. That line of Horace—"*Dii tibi dicitias dederant artemque fruendi*"—was never so applicable to the poet's friend, as to Mr. ——. My bosom burns to immortalize him. But prudence says "Forbear!" and, though a poet, I pay respect to her injunctions.

I sincerely give you joy of the good you have unconsciously done, by your example and conversation. That you seem to yourself not to deserve the acknowledgment your friend makes of it, is a proof that you do. Grace is blind to its own beauty, whereas such virtues as men may reach without it, are remarkable self-admirers. May you make such impressions upon many of your order! I know none that need them more.

You do not want my praises of your conduct towards Mr. ——. It is well for him however, and still better for yourself, that you are capable of such a part. It was said of some good man (my memory does not serve me with his name) "do him "an ill-turn, and you make him your "friend for ever." But it is christianity only, that forms such friends. I wish his father may be duly affected by this instance and proof of your superiority to those ideas of you, which he has so unreasonably harboured. He is not in my favour now, nor will he upon any other terms.

I laughed at the comments you make on your own feelings, when the subject of them was a newspaper eulogium. But it was a laugh of pleasure, and approbation: such indeed is the heart, and so is it made up. There are few that can do good, and keep their own secret, none perhaps without a struggle. Yourself, and your friend ——, are no very common instances of the fortitude, that is necessary, in such a conflict. In former days, I have felt my heart beat, and every vein throb, upon such an occasion. To publish my own deed was wrong. I knew it to be so. But to conceal it seemed like a voluntary injury to myself. Sometimes I could and sometimes I could not succeed. My occasions for such conflicts indeed were not very numerous. Yours.

LETTER LII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, Feb. 10, 1784.

THE morning is my writing time, and in the morning I have no spirits. So much the worse for my correspondents. Sleep that refreshes my body, seems to cripple me in every other respect. As the evening approaches, I grow more alert, and when I am retiring to bed, am more fit for mental occupation than at any other time. So it fares with us, whom they call nervous. By a strange inversion of the animal economy, we are ready to sleep when we have most need to be awake, and go to bed just when we might sit up to some purpose. The watch

is irregularly wound up, it goes in the night when it is not wanted, and in the day stands still. In many respects we have the advantage of our forefathers the Picts. We sleep in a whole skin, and are not obliged to submit to the painful operation of punctuating ourselves from head to foot, in order that we may be decently dressed, and fit to appear abroad. But on the other hand, we have reason enough to envy them their tone of nerves, and that flow of spirits, which effectually secured them from all uncomfortable impressions of a gloomy atmosphere, and from every shade of melancholy from every other cause. They understood, I suppose, the use of vulnerary herbs, having frequent occasion for some skill in surgery, but physicians, I presume, they had none, having no need of any. Is it possible, that a creature like myself, can be descended from such progenitors, in whom there appears not a single trace of family resemblance? What an alteration have a few ages made! They, without cloathing, would defy the severest season, and I, with all the accommodations that art has since invented, am hardly secure even in the mildest. If the wind blows upon me when my pores are open, I catch cold. A cough is the consequence. I suppose if such a disorder could have seized a Pict, his friends would have concluded that a bone had stuck in his throat, and that he was in some danger of choking. They would perhaps have addrest themselves to the cure of his cough, by thrusting their fingers into his gullet, which would only have exasperated the case. But they would never have thought of administering laudanum, my only remedy. For this difference however, that has obtained between me and my ancestors, I am indebted to the luxurious practices, and enfeebling self-indulgence, of a long line of grandsires, who, from generation to generation, have been employed in deteriorating the breed, till at last the collected effects of all their follies have centered in my puny self. A man indeed, but not in the image of those that went before me. A man, who sigh and groan, who wear out life in dejection and oppression of spirits, and who never think of the Aborigines of the country to which I belong, without wishing that I had been born among them. The evil is without a remedy, unless the ages that are passed could be recalled, my whole pedigree be permitted to live again, and being properly admonished to beware of enervating sloth and refinement, would preserve their hardiness of nature unimpaired, and transmit the desirable quality to their posterity. I once saw Adam in a dream. We sometimes say of a picture that we doubt not its likeness to the original, though we never saw him; a judgment we have some reason to form, when the face is strongly charactered, and the features full of expression. So I think of my visionary Adam, and for a similar reason. His figure was awkward indeed in the extreme. It was evident that he had never been taught by a Frenchman to hold his head erect, or to turn out his toes; to dispose gracefully of his arms, or to simper without a meaning. But if Mr. Bacon was called upon to produce a statue of Hercules, he need not wish for a juster pattern. He stood like a rock; the size of his limbs, the prominence of his muscles, and the height of his stature, all conspired to bespeak him a creature whose strength had suffered no diminution, and who being the first of his race, did not come into the world under a necessity of sustaining a load of infirmities, derived to him from the intemperance of others. He was as much stouter than a Pict, as I suppose a Pict to have been than I. Upon my hypothesis therefore, there has been a gradual declension, in point of bodily vigour, from Adam down to me, at least if my dream were a just representation of that gentleman, and deserve the credit I cannot help giving it, such must have been the case. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER LIII.

To the same.

Olney, March 11, 1784.

I RETURN you many thanks for your apology, which I have read with great pleasure. You know of old that your stile always pleases me; and having, in a former letter, given you the reasons for which I like it, I spare you now the pain of a repetition. The spirit too, in which you write, pleases me as much. But I perceive that, in some cases, it is possible to be severe, and at the same time perfectly good-tempered; in all cases, I sup-

suppose, where we suffer by an injurious and unreasonable attack, and can justify our conduct by a plain and simple narrative. On such occasions, truth itself seems a satire, because by implication, at least, it convicts our adversaries of the want of charity and candour. For this reason, perhaps, you will find, that you have made many angry, though you are not so; and it is possible, they may be the more angry upon that very account. To assert, and to prove, that an enlightened minister of the gospel may, without any violation of his conscience, and even upon the ground of prudence and propriety, continue in the establishment; and to do this with the most absolute composure, must be very provoking to the dignity of some dissenting doctors; and, to nettle them still the more, you in a manner impose upon them the necessity of being silent, by declaring, that you will be so yourself. Upon the whole, however, I have no doubt that your apology will do good. If it should irritate some, who have more zeal than knowlege, and more of bigotry than of either, it may serve to enlarge the views of others, and to convince them that there may be grace, truth, and efficacy, in the ministry of a church, of which they are not members. I wish it success, and all that attention to which, both from the nature of the subject, and the manner in which you have treated it, it is so well entitled.

The patronage of the East Indies will be a dangerous weapon, in whatever hands. I have no prospect of a deliverance for this country, but the same that I have of a possibility that we may one day be disencumbered of our ruinous possessions in the East.

Our good neighbours, who have so successfully knocked away our Western crutch from under us, seem to design us the same favour on the opposite side, in which case we shall be poor, but I think we shall stand a better chance to be free; and I had rather drink water-gruel for breakfast, and be no man's slave, than wear a chain, and drink tea as usual.

I have just room to add, that we love you as usual, and are your affectionate William and Mary.

LETTER LIV.

To the same.

My dear Friend, March 19, 1784.

I wish it were in my power to give you any account of the Marquis Caracciioli. Some years since I saw a short history of him in the Review, of which I recollect no particulars, except that he was (and for aught I know may be still) an officer in the Prussian service. I have two volumes of his works, lent me by Lady Austen. One is upon the subject of self-acquaintance, and the other treats of the art of conversing with the same gentleman. Had I pursued my purpose of translating him, my design was to have furnished myself, if possible, with some authentic account of him, which I suppose may be procured at any bookseller's who deals in foreign publications. But for the reasons given in my last I have laid aside the design. There is something in his style that touches me exceedingly, and which I do not know how to describe. I should call it pathetic, if it were occasionally only, and never occurred but when his subject happened to be particularly affecting. But it is universal; he has not a sentence that is not marked with it. Perhaps, therefore, I may describe it better by saying, that his whole work has an air of pious and tender melancholy, which to me, at least, is extremely agreeable. This property of it, which depends perhaps altogether upon the arrangement of his words, and the modulation of his sentences, it would be very difficult to preserve in a translation. I do not know that our language is capable of being so managed, and rather suspect that it is not, and that it is peculiar to the French, because it is not unfrequent among their writers, and I never saw any thing similar to it in our own.

My evenings are devoted to books. I read aloud for the entertainment of the party, thus making amends by a vociferation of two hours for my silence at other times. We are in good health, and waiting as patiently as we can, for the end of this second winter. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER LV.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, April 5, 1784.

I THANKED you in my last for Johnson, I now thank you, with more emphasis, for Beattie, the most agreeable and amiable writer I ever met with: the only author I have seen whose critical and philosophical researches are diversified and embellished by a poetical imagination, that makes even the driest subject, and the leanest, a feast for an epicure in books. He is so much at his ease too, that his own character appears in every page, and, which is very rare, we see not only the writer, but the man; and that man so gentle, so well tempered, so happy in his religion, and so humane in his philosophy, that it is necessary to love him if one has any sense of what is lovely. If you have not his poem called the Minstrel, and cannot borrow it, I must beg you to buy it for me; for though I cannot afford to deal largely in so expensive a commodity as books, I must afford to purchase at least the poetical works of Beattie. I have read six of Blair's Lectures, and what do I say of Blair? That he is a sensible man, master of his subject, and excepting here and there a Scotticism, a good writer, so far at least as perspicuity of expression, and method, contribute to make one. But oh the sterility of that man's fancy! if indeed he has any such faculty belonging to him. Perhaps philosophers, or men designed for such, are sometimes born without one; or perhaps it withers for want of exercise. However that may be, Doctor Blair has such a brain as Shakespear somewhere describes—"dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage."

I take it for granted, that these good men are philosophically correct (for they are both agreed upon the subject) in their account of the origin of language; and if the scripture had left us in the dark upon that article, I should very readily adopt their hypothesis for want of better information. I should suppose for instance, that man made his first effort in speech, in the way of an interjection, and that ah, or oh, being uttered with wonderful gesticulation, and variety of attitude, must have left his powers of expression quite exhausted; that in a course of time he would invent many names for many things, but first for the objects of his daily wants. An apple would consequently be called an apple, and perhaps not many years would elapse before the appellation would receive the sanction of general use. In this case, and upon this supposition, seeing one in the hand of another man, he would exclaim with a most moving pathos, "Oh "apple!"—well and good—oh apple! is a very affecting speech, but in the mean time it profits him nothing. The man that holds it, eats it, and he goes away with Oh apple in his mouth, and with nothing better. Reflecting on his disappointment, and that perhaps it arose from his not being more explicit, he contrives a term to denote his idea of transfer or gratuitous communication, and the next occasion, that offers of a similar kind, performs his part accordingly. His speech now stands thus, "Oh give apple!" The apple-holder perceives himself called upon to part with his fruit, and, having satisfied his own hunger, is perhaps not unwilling to do so. But unfortunately there is still room for a mistake, and, a third person being present, he gives the apple to him. Again disappointed, and again perceiving that his language has not all the precision that is requisite, the orator retires to his study, and there after much deep thinking, conceives that the insertion of a pronoun, whose office shall be to signify that he not only wants the apple to be given, but given to himself, will remedy all defects; he uses it the next opportunity, and succeeds to a wonder, obtains the apple, and by his success, such credit to his invention, that pronouns continue to be in great repute ever after.

Now as my two syllable-mongers, Beattie and Blair, both agree that language was originally inspired, and that the great variety of languages we find upon earth at present, took its rise from the confusion of tongues at Babel, I am not perfectly convinced that there is any just occasion to invent this very ingenious solution of a difficulty, which scripture has solved already. My opinion however is, if I may presume to have an opinion of my own, so different from theirs, who are so much wiser than myself, that if man had been his own teacher,

er, and had acquired his words and his phrases only as necessity or convenience had prompted, his progress must have been considerably slower than it was, and in Homer's days the production of such a poem as the Iliad impossible. On the contrary, I doubt not Adam on the very day of his creation, was able to express himself in terms both forcible and elegant, and that he was at no loss for sublime diction, and logical combination, when he wanted to praise his Maker. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER LVI.

To the same.

My dear William, April 25 1784.

I WISH I had both burning words and bright thoughts. But I have at present neither. My head is not itself. Having had an unpleasant night, and a melancholy day, and having already written a long letter, I do not find myself in point of spirits at all qualified either to burn or shine. The post sets out early on Tuesday. The morning is the only time of exercise with me. In order therefore to keep it open for that purpose, and to comply with your desire of an immediate answer, I give you as much as I can spare of the present evening.

Since I dispatched my last, Blair has crept a little farther into my favour. As his subjects improve, he improves with them; but upon the whole I account him a dry writer, useful no doubt as an instructor, but as little entertaining, as with so much knowledge, it is possible to be. His language is (except Swift's) the least figurative I remember to have seen, and the few figures found in it are not always happily employed. I take him to be a critic very little animated by what he reads, who rather reasons about the beauties of an author than really tastes them, and who finds that a passage is praise-worthy, not because it charms him, but because it is accommodated to the laws of criticism, in that case made and provided. I have a little complied with your desire of marginal annotations, and should have dealt in them more largely, had I read the books to myself; but being reader to the ladies, I have not always time to settle my own opinion of a doubtful expression, much less to suggest an emendation. I have not censured a particular observation in the book, though, when I met with it, it displeased me. I this moment recollect it, and may as well therefore note it here. He is commending, and deservedly, that most noble description of a thunder storm in the first Georgic, which ends with

Ingeminant austri et densissimus imber.

Being in haste, I do not refer to the volume for his very words, but my memory will serve me with the matter. When poets describe, he says, they should always select such circumstances of the subject as are least obvious, and therefore most striking.—He therefore admires the effects of the thunder-bolt splitting mountains, and filling a nation with astonishment, but quarrels with the closing member of the period, as containing particulars of a storm not worthy of Virgil's notice, because obvious to the notice of all. But here I differ from him; not being able to conceive that wind and rain can be improper in the description of a tempest, or how wind and rain could possibly be more poetically described. Virgil is indeed remarkable for finishing his periods well, and never comes to a stop but with the most consummate dignity of numbers and expression, and in the instance in question, I think, his skill in this respect is remarkably displayed. The line is perfectly majestic in its march. As to the wind, it is such only as the word *ingeminant* could describe, and the words *densissimus imber* give one an idea of a shower indeed, but of such a shower as is not very common, and such a one as only Virgil could have done justice to by a single epithet. Far therefore from agreeing with the doctor in his stricture, I do not think the Æneid contains a nobler line, or a description more magnificently finished.

We are glad that Dr. C—— has singled you out upon this occasion. Your performance we doubt not will justify his choice: fear not—you have a heart that can feel upon charitable occasions, and therefore will not fail you upon this. The burning words will come fast enough, when the sensibility is such as yours. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER LVII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, May 8, 1784.

You do well to make your letters merry ones, though not very merry yourself, and that both for my sake and your own; for your own sake, because it sometimes happens that by assuming an air of cheerfulness, we become cheerful in reality; and for mine, because I have always more need of a laugh than a cry, being somewhat disposed to melancholy by natural temperament, as well as by other causes.

It was long since, and even in the infancy of John Gilpin, recommended to me by a lady, now at Bristol, to write a sequel. But having always observed, that authors, elated with the success of a first part, have fallen below themselves, when they have attempted a second, I had more prudence than to take her counsel. I want you to read the history of that hero, published by Bladon, and to tell me what it is made of. But buy it not. For, puffed as it is in the papers, it can be but a bookseller's job, and must be dear at the price of two shillings. In the last pacquet but one that I received from Johnson, he asked me if I had any improvements of John Gilpin in hand, or if I designed any; for that to print only the original again, would be to publish what has been hackneied in every magazine, in every newspaper, and in every street. I answered, that the copy which I sent him contained two or three small variations from the first, except which I had none to propose, and if he thought him now too trite to make a part of my volume, I should willingly acquiesce in his judgment. I take it for granted therefore, that he will not bring up the rear of my poems according to my first intention, and shall not be sorry for the omission. It may spring from a principle of pride; but spring from what it may, I feel, and have long felt, a disinclination to a public avowal that he is mine; and since he became so popular, I have felt it more than ever, not that I should have expressed a scruple, if Johnson had not. But a fear has suggested itself to me, that I might expose myself to a charge of vanity by admitting him into my book, and that some people would impute it to me as a crime. Consider what the world is made of, and you will not find my suspicions chimerical. Add to this, that when on correcting the latter part of the fifth book of the Task, I came to consider the solemnity and sacred nature of the subjects there handled, it seemed to me an incongruity at the least, not to call it by a harsher name, to follow up such premises with such a conclusion. I am well content therefore with having laughed, and made others laugh, and will build my hopes of success, as a poet, upon more important matter.

In our printing business we now jog on merrily enough. The coming week will, I hope, bring me to an end of the Task, and the next fortnight to an end of the whole. I am glad to have Paley on my side in the affair of education. He is certainly on all subjects a sensible man, and on such, a wise one. But I am mistaken, if Tirocinium do not make some of my friends angry, and procure me enemies not a few. There is a sting in verse that prose neither has, nor can have, and I do not know, that schools in the gross, and especially public schools, have ever been so pointedly condemned before. But they are become a nuisance, a pest, an abomination, and it is fit that the eyes and noses of mankind should, if possible, be opened to perceive it.

This is indeed an author's letter; but it is an author's letter to his friend. If you will be the friend of an author, you must expect such letters. Come July, and come yourself, with as many of your exterior selves as can possibly come with you!

Yours, my dear William, affectionately, and with your mother's remembrances. Adieu.

LETTER LVIII.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, July 5, 1784.

A dearth of materials, a consciousness that my subjects are for the most part, and must be uninteresting and unimportant, but above all, a poverty of animal spirits, that makes writing much a great fatigue to me, have occasioned my choice of smaller paper. Acquiesce in the justness of these reasons for the present; and if ever the times should mend

mend with me, I sincerely promise to amend with them.

Homer says on a certain occasion, that Jupiter, when he was wanted at home, was gone to partake of an entertainment provided for him by the Æthiopians. If by Jupiter we understand the weather, or the season, as the ancients frequently did, we may say, that our English Jupiter has been absent on account of some such invitation: during the whole month of June he left us to experience almost the rigours of winter. This fine day, however, affords us some hope that the feast is ended, and that we shall enjoy his company without the interference of his Æthiopian friends again.

Is it possible that the wise men of antiquity could entertain a real reverence for the fabulous rubbish which they dignified with the name of religion? We, who have been favoured from our infancy with so clear a light, are perhaps hardly competent to decide the question, and may strive in vain to imagine the absurdities, that even a good understanding may receive as truths, when totally unaided by revelation. It seems however, that men, whose conceptions upon other subjects were often sublime, whose reasoning powers were undoubtedly equal to our own, and whose management in matters of jurisprudence, that required a very industrious examination of evidence, was as acute and subtle as that of a modern attorney-general, could not be the dupes of such imposture, as a child among us would detect and laugh at. Juvenal, I remember, introduces one of his satires with an observation, that there were some in his day who had the hardiness to laugh at the stories of Tartarus and Styx and Charon, and of the frogs that croak upon the banks of Lethe, giving his reader, at the same time, cause to suspect, that he was himself one of that profane number. Horace, on the other hand, declares in sober sadness, that he would not for all the world get into a boat with a man who had divulged the Eleusinian mysteries. Yet we know, that those mysteries, whatever they might be, were altogether as unworthy to be esteemed divine, as the mythology of the vulgar. How then must we determine? If Horace were a good and orthodox heathen, how came Juvenal to be such an ungracious libertine in principle, as to ridicule the doctrines which the other held as sacred? Their opportunities of information, and their mental advantages were equal. I feel myself rather inclined to believe, that Juvenal's avowed infidelity was sincere, and that Horace was no better than a canting hypocritical professor.

You must grant me a dispensation for saying any thing, whether it be sense, or non-sense, upon the subject of politics. It is truly a matter, in which I am so little interested, that were it not that it sometimes serves me for a theme, when I can find no other, I should never mention it. I would forfeit a large sum, if after advertising a month in the Gazette, the minister of the day, whoever he may be, could discover a man that cares about him, or his measures, so little as I do. When I say, that I would forfeit a large sum, I mean to have it understood, that I would forfeit such a sum, if I had it. If Mr. Pitt be indeed a virtuous man, as such I respect him. But at the best, I fear, that he will have to say at last with Æneas,

Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi possent, etiam hâc defensa fuissent.

Be he what he may, I do not like his taxes. At least I am much disposed to quarrel with some of them. The additional duty upon candles, by which the poor will be much affected, hurts me most. He says, indeed, that they will but little feel it, because even now they can hardly afford the use of them. He had certainly put no compassion into his budget, when he produced from it this tax, and such an argument to support it. Justly translated, it seems to amount to this—"Make the necessaries of life too "expensive for the poor to reach them, "and you will save their money. If they "buy but few candles, they will pay but "little tax; and if they buy none, the "tax as to them, will be annihilated." True. But, in the mean time, they will break their shins against their furniture, if they have any, and will be but little the richer, when the hours, in which they might work, if they could see, shall be deducted.

I have bought a great dictionary, and want nothing but Latin authors, to furnish me with the use of it. Had I purchased them first, I had began at the right

end. But I could not afford it. I beseech you admire my prudence.

Vivite, valete, et mementote nostrûm.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER LIX.

To the same.

My dear Friend, July 28, 1784.

I MAY perhaps be short, but am not willing that you should go to Lymington without first having had a line from me. I know that place well, having spent six weeks there, above twenty years ago. The town is neat, and the country delightful. You walk well, and will consequently find a part of the coast, called Hall Cliff, within the reach of your ten toes. It was a favourite walk of mine; to the best of my remembrance, about three miles distant from Lymington. There you may stand upon the beach, and contemplate the Needle-rock. At least you might have done so twenty years ago. But since that time, I think, it is fallen from its base, and is drowned, and is no longer a visible object of contemplation. I wish you may pass your time there happily, as in all probability you will, perhaps usefully too to others, undoubtedly so to yourself.

The manner in which you have been previously made acquainted with Mr. Gilpin, gives a providential air to your journey, and affords reason to hope, that you may be charged with a message to him. I admire him as a biographer. But as Mrs. Unwin and I were talking of him last night, we could not but wonder, that a man should see so much excellence in the lives, and so much glory and beauty in the death of the martyrs, whom he has recorded, and at the same time disapprove the principles, that produced the very conduct he admired. It seems however a step towards the truth to applaud the fruits of it; and one cannot help thinking, that one step more would put him in possession of the truth itself. By your means may he be enabled to take it!

We are obliged to you for the preference you would have given to Olney, had not Providence determined your course another way. But as when we saw you last summer, you gave us no reason to expect you this, we are the less disappointed. At your age and mine, biennial visits have such a gap between them, that we cannot promise ourselves upon those terms very numerous future interviews. But, whether ours are to be many or few, you will always be welcome to me, for the sake of the comfortable days that are past. In my present state of mind, my friendship for you indeed is as warm as ever. But I feel myself very indifferently qualified to be your companion. Other days than these inglorious and unprofitable ones, are promised me, and when I see them, I shall rejoice.

I saw the advertisement of your adversary's book. He is happy at least in this, that, whether he have brains or none, he strikes without the danger of being stricken again. He could not wish to engage in a controversy upon easier terms. The other, whose publication is postponed till Christmas, is resolved, I suppose, to do something. But do what he will, he cannot prove, that you have not been aspersed, or that you have not refuted the charge; which, unless he can do, I think he will do little to the purpose.

Mrs. Unwin thinks of you, and always with a grateful recollection of yours, and Mrs. Newton's kindness. She has had a nervous fever lately. But I hope she is better. The weather forbids walking, a prohibition hurtful to us both.

We heartily wish you a good journey, and are affectionately yours.

LETTER LX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear Friend, Aug. 14, 1784.

I GIVE you joy of a journey performed without trouble or danger. You have travelled five hundred miles without having encountered either. Some neighbours of ours, about a fortnight since, made an excursion only to a neighbouring village, and brought home with them fractured sculls, and broken limbs, and one of them is dead. For my own part, I seem pretty much exempted from the dangers of the road. Thanks to that tender interest and concern, which the legislature takes in my security! Having no doubt their fears lest so precious a life should determine too soon, and by some untimely stroke of misadventure; they have made wheels and horses so expensive,

pensive, that I am not likely to owe my death to either.

Your mother and I continue to visit Weston daily, and find in those agreeable bowers, such amusement, as leaves us but little room to regret, that we can go no farther. Having touched that theme, I cannot abstain from the pleasure of telling you, that our neighbours in that place, being about to leave it for some time, and meeting us there but a few evenings before their departure, entreated us, during their absence, to consider the garden, and all its contents, as our own, and to gather whatever we liked, without the least scruple. We accordingly picked strawberries as often as we went, and brought home as many bundles of honey-suckles as served to perfume our dwelling till they returned.

Once more, by the aid of Lord Dartmouth, I find myself a voyager in the Pacific ocean. In our last night's lecture we made our acquaintance with the island of Hapaee, where we had never been before. The French and Italians, it seems, have but little cause to plume themselves on account of their achievements in the dancing way; and we may hereafter, without much repining at it, acknowledge their superiority in that art. They are equalled, perhaps excelled, by savages. How wonderful, that without any intercourse with a politer world, and having made no proficiency in any other accomplishment, they should in this, however, have made themselves such adepts, that for regularity and grace of motion, they might even be our masters. How wonderful too, that with a tub, and a stick, they should be able to produce such harmony, as persons accustomed to the sweetest music, cannot but hear with pleasure. Is it not very difficult to account for the striking difference of character, that obtains among the inhabitants of these islands? Many of them are near neighbours to each other; their opportunities of improvement much the same; yet some of them are in a degree polite, discover symptoms of taste, and have a sense of elegance; while others are as rude as we naturally expect to find a people, who have never had any communication with the northern hemisphere. These volumes furnish much matter of philosophical speculation, and often entertain me, even while I am not employed in reading them.

I am sorry you have not been able to ascertain the doubtful intelligence I have received on the subject of cork skirts, and bosoms. I am now every day occupied in giving all the grace I can, to my new production, and in transcribing it; I shall soon arrive at the passage that censures that folly, which I shall be loth to expunge, but which I must not spare, unless the criminals can be convicted. The world, however, is not so unproductive of subjects of censure, but that it may probably supply me with some other, that may serve as well.

If you know any body that is writing, or intends to write, an epic poem on the new regulation of *franks*, you may give him my compliments, and these two lines for a beginning—

Heu quot amatores nunc torquet epistola rara!
Vectigal certum, perituraque gratia FRANKI!

Yours faithfully.

LETTER LXI.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, Aug. 16, 1784.

HAD you not expressed a desire to hear from me before you take leave of Lymington, I certainly should not have answered you so soon. Knowing the place, and the amusements it affords, I should have had more modesty than to suppose myself capable of adding any thing to your present entertainments worthy to rank with them. I am not, however, totally destitute of such pleasures as an inland country may pretend to. If my windows do not command a view of the ocean, at least they look out upon a profusion of mignonette; which, if it be not so grand an object, is, however, quite as fragrant: and if I have not an hermit in a grotto, I have nevertheless myself in a green-house, a less venerable figure perhaps, but not at all less animated than he: nor are we in this nook altogether unfurnished with such means of philosophical experiment, and speculation, as at present the world rings with. On Thursday morning last, we sent up a balloon from Emberton meadow. Thrice it rose, and as oft' descended, and in the evening it performed another

flight at Newport, where it went up, and came down no more. Like the arrow, discharged at the pigeon in the Trojan games, it kindled in the air, and was consumed in a moment. I have not heard what interpretation the soothsayers have given to the omen, but shall wonder a little if the Newton shepherd prognosticate any thing less from it than the most bloody war, that was ever waged in Europe.

I am reading Cook's last voyage, and am much pleased and amused with it. It seems, that in some of the Friendly isles, they excel so much in dancing, and perform that operation with such exquisite delicacy and grace, that they are not surpassed even upon our European stages. Oh! that Vestris had been in the ship, that he might have seen himself outdone by a savage. The paper indeed tells us, that the queen of France has clapped this king of capers up in prison, for declining to dance before her, on a pretence of sickness, when in fact he was in perfect health. If this be true, perhaps he may by this time be prepared to second such a wish as mine, and to think, that the durance he suffers, would be well exchanged for a dance at Annamooka. I should, however, as little have expected to hear, that these islanders had such consummate skill in an art that requires so much taste in the conduct of the person, as that they were good mathematicians and astronomers. Defective, as they are, in every branch of knowledge, and in every other species of refinement, it seems wonderful that they should arrive at such perfection in the dance, which some of our English gentlemen, with all the assistance of French instruction, find it impossible to learn. We must conclude, therefore, that particular nations have a genius for particular feats, and that our neighbours in France, and our friends in the South Sea, have minds very nearly akin, though they inhabit countries so very remote from each other.

Mrs. Unwin remembers to have been in company with Mr. Gilpin at her brother's. She thought him very sensible and polite, and consequently very agreeable.

We are truly glad that Mrs. Newton and yourself are so well, and that there is reason to hope that Eliza is better. You will learn from this letter that we are so, and that for my own part, I am not quite so low in spirits as at some times. Learn too, what you knew before, that we love you all, and that I am your affectionate friend.

LETTER LXII.

To the same.

My dear Friend, Sept. 18, 1784.

Following your good example, I lay before me a sheet of my largest paper. It was this moment fair and unblemished, but I have begun to blot it, and having begun, am not likely to cease till I have spoiled it. I have sent you many a sheet that in my judgment of it, has been very unworthy of your acceptance, but my conscience was in some measure satisfied by reflecting, that if it were good for nothing, at the same time it cost you nothing, except the trouble of reading it. But the case is altered now. You must pay a solid price for frothy matter, and though I do not absolutely pick your pocket, yet you lose your money, and, as the saying is, are never the wiser.

My green-house is never so pleasant as when we are just upon the point of being turned out of it. The gentleness of the autumnal suns, and the calmness of this latter season, make it a much more agreeable retreat than we ever find it in the summer; when the winds being generally brisk, we cannot cool it by admitting a sufficient quantity of air, without being, at the same time, incommoded by it. But now I sit with all the windows and the door wide open, and am regaled with the scent of every flower, in a garden as full of flowers as I have known how to make it. We keep no bees, but if I lived in a hive, I should hardly hear more of their music. All the bees in the neighbourhood resort to a bed of mignonette, opposite to the window, and pay me for the honey they get out of it, by a hum, which though rather monotonous, is as agreeable to my ear, as the whistling of my linnets. All the sounds that nature utters are delightful, at least in this country. I should not perhaps find the roaring of lions in Africa, or of bears in Russia, very pleasing, but I know

I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not indeed think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlour for the sake of his melody, but a goose upon a common, or in a farmyard, is no bad performer: and as to insects, if the black beetle, and beetles indeed of all hues, will keep out of my way, I have no objection to any of the rest; on the contrary, in whatever key they sing, from the gnat's fine treble, to the bass of the humble bee, I admire them all. Seriously however, it strikes me as a very observable instance of providential kindness to man, that such an exact accord has been contrived between his ear, and the sounds with which, at least in a rural situation, it is almost every moment visited. All the world is sensible of the uncomfortable effect that certain sounds have upon the nerves, and consequently upon the spirits.—And if a sinful world had been filled with such as would have curdled the blood, and have made the sense of hearing a perpetual inconvenience, I do not know that we should have had a right to complain. But now the fields, the woods, the gardens, have each their concert, and the ear of man is for ever regaled, by creatures who seem only to please themselves. Even the ears that are deaf to the gospel, are continually entertained, though without knowing it, by sounds, for which they are solely indebted to its author. There is somewhere in infinite space, a world, that does not roll within the precincts of mercy, and as it is reasonable, and even scriptural to suppose, that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found; tones so dismal, as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair. But my paper admonishes me in good time to draw the reins, and to check the descent of my fancy into deeps, with which she is but too familiar.

Our best love attends you both, with yours.

LETTER LXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, Oct. 2, 1784.

A POET can but ill spare time for prose. The truth is, I am in haste to finish my transcript, that you may receive it time enough to give it a leisurely reading before you go to town; which, whether I shall be able to accomplish, is at present uncertain. I have the whole punctuation to settle, which in blank verse is of the last importance, and of a species peculiar to that composition; for I know no use of points, unless to direct the voice, the management of which, in the reading of blank verse, being more difficult than in the reading of any other poetry, requires perpetual hints and notices, to regulate the inflections, cadences, and pauses. This, however, is an affair, that in spite of grammarians, must be left pretty much *ad libitum scriptoris.* For, I suppose every author points according to his own reading. If I can send the parcel to the waggon by one o'clock next Wednesday, you will have it on Saturday the ninth. But this is more than I expect. Perhaps I shall not be able to dispatch it till the eleventh, in which case it will not reach you till the thirteenth. I the rather think that the latter of these two periods will obtain, because, besides the punctuation, I have the argument of each book to transcribe. Add to this, that in writing for the printer, I am forced to write my best, which makes slow work. The motto of the whole is—*Fit succulus arbor.* If you can put the author's name under it, do so—if not, it must go without one. For I know not to whom to ascribe it. It was a motto taken by a certain prince of Orange, in the year 1733, but not to a poem of his own writing, or indeed to any poem at all, but, as I think, to a medal.

Mr. ——— is a Cornish member; but for what place in Cornwall I know not. All I know of him is, that I saw him once clap his two hands upon a rail, meaning to leap over it. But he did not think the attempt a safe one, and therefore took them off again. He was in company with Mr. Throckmorton. With that gentleman we drank chocolate, since I wrote

I wrote last. The occasion of our visit was, as usual, a balloon. Your mother invited her, and I him, and they promised to return the visit, but have not yet performed. *Tout le monde se trouvoit là*, as you may suppose, among the rest, Mrs. W——. She was driven to the door by her son, a boy of seventeen, in a phaeton, drawn by four horses from Lilliput. This is an ambiguous expression, and should what I write now be legible a thousand years hence, might puzzle commentators. Be it known, therefore, to the Aldusses, and the Stevenses of ages yet to come, that I do not mean to affirm, that Mrs. W—— herself came from Lilliput that morning, or indeed that she ever was there, but merely to describe the horses, as being so diminutive, that they might be, with propriety, said to be Lilliputian.

The privilege of franking having been so cropped, I know not in what manner I and my bookseller are to settle the conveyance of proof sheets hither, and back again. They must travel, I imagine, by coach, a large quantity of them at a time; for, like other authors, I find myself under a poetical necessity of being frugal.

We love you all, jointly, and separately, as usual.

LETTER LXIV.

To the Rev. John Newton.

My dear Friend, Oct. 9, 1784.

THE pains you have taken to disengage our correspondence from the expence with which it was threatened, convincing me that my letters, trivial as they are, are yet acceptable to you, encourage me to observe my usual punctuality. You complain of unconnected thoughts. I believe there is not a head in the world but might utter the same complaint, and that all would do so, were they all as attentive to their own vagaries, and as honest as yours. The description of your meditations at least suits mine; perhaps I can go a step beyond you, upon the same ground, and assert with the strictest truth, that I not only do not think with connexion, but that I frequently do not think at all. I am much mistaken if I do not often catch myself napping in this way; for when I ask myself, what was the last idea, (as the ushers at Westminster ask an idle boy, what was the last word) I am not able to answer, but like the boy in question, am obliged to stare and say nothing. This may be a very unphilosophical account of myself, and may clash very much with the general opinion of the learned, that the soul being an active principle, and her activity consisting in thought, she must consequently always think. But pardon me, messieurs les philosophes, there are moments, when if I think at all, I am utterly unconscious of doing so, and the thought, and the consciousness of it, seem to me at least, who am no philosopher, to be inseparable from each other. Perhaps however, we may both be right; and if you will grant me that I do not always think, I will in return concede to you the activity you contend for, and will qualify the difference between us by supposing, that though the soul be in herself an active principle, the influence of her present union with a principle that is not such, makes her often dormant, suspends her operations, and affects her with a sort of deliquium, in which she suffers a temporary loss of all her functions. I have related to you my experience truly, and without disguise; you must therefore, either admit my assertion, that the soul does not necessarily always act, or deny that mine is an human soul: a negative, that I am sure you will not easily prove. So much for a dispute which I little thought of being engaged in to day.

Last night I had a letter from Lord Dartmouth. It was to apprise me of the safe arrival of Cook's last voyage, which he was so kind as to lend me in St. James's square. The reading of those volumes afforded me much amusement, and I hope some instruction. No observation, however, forced itself upon me with more violence than one, that I could not help making on the death of captain Cook. God is a jealous God, and at Owhyhee the poor man was content to be worshipped. From that moment, the remarkable interposition of Providence in his favour, was converted into an opposition, that thwarted all his purposes. He left the scene of his deification, but was driven back to it by a most violent storm, in which he suffered more

more than in any, that had preceded it. When he departed, he left his worshippers still infatuated with an idea of his godship, consequently well disposed to serve him. At his return, he found them sullen, distrustful, and mysterious. A trifling theft was committed, which, by a blunder of his own in pursuing the thief after the property had been restored, was magnified to an affair of the last importance. One of their favourite chiefs was killed too by a blunder. Nothing, in short, but blunder and mistake attended him, till he fell breathless into the water, and then all was smooth again. The world indeed will not take notice, or see, that the dispensation bore evident marks of divine displeasure; but a mind, I think, in any degree spiritual, cannot overlook them. We know from truth itself, that the death of Herod was for a similar offence. But Herod was in no sense a believer in God, nor had enjoyed half the opportunities, with which our poor countryman had been favoured. It may be urged, perhaps, that he was in jest, that he meant nothing but his own amusement, and that of his companions. I doubt it. He knows little of the heart, who does not know, that even in a sensible man, it is flattered by every species of exaltation. But be it so, that he was in sport—it was not humane, to say no worse of it, to sport with the ignorance of his friends, to mock their simplicity, to humour and acquiesce in their blind credulity. Besides, though a stock or stone may be worshipped blameless, a baptised man may not. He knows what he does, and by suffering such honours to be paid him, incurs the guilt of sacrilege.

We are glad that you are so happy in your church, in your society, and in all your connexions. I have not left myself room to say any thing of the love we feel for you. Yours, my dear friend.

LETTER LXV.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

My dear Friend, November, 1784.

To condole with you on the death of a mother aged eighty-seven would be absurd—rather, therefore, as is reasonable, I congratulate you on the almost singular felicity of having enjoyed the company of so amiable, and so near a relation so long. Your lot and mine in this respect have been very different, as indeed in almost every other. Your mother lived to see you rise, at least to see you comfortably established in the world. Mine dying when I was six years old, did not live to see me sink in it. You may remember with pleasure while you live, a blessing vouchsafed to you so long, and I, while I live, must regret a comfort, of which I was deprived so early. I can truly say, that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day) in which I do not think of her. Such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity she had for shewing it was so short. But the ways of God are equal—and when I reflect on the pangs she would have suffered had she been a witness of all mine, I see more cause to rejoice, than to mourn, that she was hidden in the grave so soon.

We have, as you say, lost a lively and sensible neighbour in Lady Austen; but we have been long accustomed to a state of retirement, within one degree of solitude, and being naturally lovers of still life, can relapse into our former duality without being unhappy at the change. To me indeed a third is not necessary, while I can have the companion I have had these twenty years.

I am gone to the press again; a volume of mine will greet your hands some time either in the course of the winter, or early in the spring. You will find it perhaps, on the whole, more entertaining than the former, as it treats a greater variety of subjects, and those, at least the most, of a sublunary kind. It will consist of a poem in six books, called the Task. To which will be added another, which I finished yesterday, called, I believe, Tirocinium, on the subject of education.

You perceive that I have taken your advice, and given the pen no rest.

LETTER LXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, March 20, 1785.

I THANK you for your letter. It made me laugh, and there are not many things capable of being contained within the dimensions of a letter, for which I

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see cause to be more thankful. I was pleased too, to see my opinion of his Lordship's *nonchalance* upon a subject, that you had so much at heart, completely verified. I do not know, that the eye of a nobleman was ever dissected. I cannot help supposing however, that, were that organ, as it exists in the head of such a personage, to be accurately examined, it would be found to differ materially in its construction from the eye of a commoner; so very different is the view, that men in an elevated, and in an humble station, have of the same object. What appears great, sublime, beautiful, and important, to you and to me, when submitted to my lord, or his grace, and submitted too with the utmost humility, is either too minute to be visible at all, or if seen, seems trivial, and of no account. My supposition therefore seems not altogether chimerical.

In two months I have corrected proof-sheets to the amount of ninety-three pages, and no more. In other words, I have received three pacquets. Nothing is quick enough for impatience, and I suppose that the impatience of an author has the quickest of all possible movements. It appears to me however, that at this rate we shall not publish till next autumn. Should you happen therefore to pass Johnson's door, pop in your head as you go, and just insinuate to him, that, were his remittances rather more frequent, that frequency would be no inconvenience to me. I much expected one this evening, a fortnight having now elapsed since the arrival of the last. But none came, and I felt myself a little mortified. I took up the newspaper, however, and read it. There I found, that the Emperor and the Dutch are, after all their negotiations, going to war. Such reflections as these struck me. A great part of Europe is going to be involved in the greatest of all calamities —troops are in motion—artillery is drawn together—cabinets are busied in contriving schemes of blood, and devastation—thousands will perish, who are incapable of understanding the dispute; and thousands, who, whatever the event may be, are little more interested in it than myself, will suffer unspeakable hardships in the course of the quarrel—Well! Mr. Poet, and how then? You have composed certain verses, which you are desirous to see in print, and because the impression seems to be delayed, you are displeased, not to say dispirited—be ashamed of yourself! you live in a world in which your feelings may find worthier subjects —be concerned for the havoc of nations, and mourn over your retarded volume, when you find a dearth of more important tragedies!

You postpone certain topics of conference to our next meeting. When shall it take place? I do not wish for you just now, because the garden is a wilderness, and so is all the country around us. In May we shall have 'sparagus, and weather, in which we may stroll to Weston; at least, we may hope for it; therefore come in May; you will find us happy to receive you, and as much of your fair household as you can bring with you.

We are very sorry for your uncle's indisposition. The approach of summer seems, however, to be in his favour, that season, being of all remedies for the rheumatism, I believe, the most effectual.

I thank you for your intelligence concerning the celebrity of John Gilpin. You may be sure that it was agreeable —but your own feelings on occasion of that article, pleased me most of all. Well, my friend, be comforted! You had not an opportunity of saying publicly, "I know the author." But the author himself will say as much for you soon, and perhaps will feel in doing so a gratification equal to your own.

In the affair of face painting, I am precisely of your opinion. Adieu.

LETTER LXVII.

To the same.

April 30, 1785.

My dear Friend,

I RETURN you thanks for a letter so warm with the intelligence of the celebrity of John Gilpin. I little thought, when I mounted him upon my Pegasus, that he would become so famous. I have learned also, from Mr. Newton, that he is equally renowned in Scotland, and that a lady there had undertaken to write a second part, on the subject of Mrs. Gilpin's return to London; but not succeeding in it as she wished, she dropped it. He tells me likewise, that the head master of St. Paul's school (who

(who he is I know not) has conceived, in consequence of the entertainment that John has afforded him, a vehement desire to write to me. Let us hope he will alter his mind; for should we even exchange civilities on the occasion, Tirocinium will spoil all. The great estimation, however, in which this knight of the stone-bottles is held, may turn out a circumstance propitious to the volume, of which his history will make a part. Those events, that prove the prelude to our greatest success, are often apparently trivial in themselves, and such as seemed to promise nothing. The disappointment that Horace mentions, is reversed —We design a mug, and it proves a hogshead. It is a little hard, that I alone should be unfurnished with a printed copy of this facetious story. When you visit London next, you must buy the most elegant impression of it, and bring it with you. I thank you also for writing to Johnson. I likewise wrote to him myself. Your letter and mine together, have operated to admiration. There needs nothing more, but that the effect be lasting, and the whole will soon be printed. We now draw towards the middle of the fifth book of the Task. The man, Johnson, is like unto some vicious horses that I have known. They would not budge, till they were spurred, and, when they were spurred, they would kick.—So did he—His temper was somewhat disconcerted; but his pace was quickened, and I was contented.

I was very much pleased with the following sentence in Mr. Newton's last—"I am perfectly satisfied with the propriety of your proceeding as to the publication."—Now therefore we are friends again. Now he once more enquires after the work, which, till he had disburthened himself of this acknowledgment, neither he nor I, in any of our letters to each other, ever mentioned. Some side-wind has wafted to him a report of those reasons, by which I justified my conduct. I never made a secret of them. Both your mother and I have studiously deposited them with those, who we thought were most likely to transmit them to him. They wanted only an hearing, which once obtained, their solidity and cogency were such, that they were sure to prevail.

You mention ———. I formerly knew the man you mention, but his elder brother much better. We were school-fellows, and he was one of a club of seven Westminster men, to which I belonged, who dined together every Thursday. Should it please God to give me ability to perform the poet's part to some purpose, many whom I once called friends, but who have since treated me with a most magnificent indifference, will be ready to take me by the hand again, and some, whom I never held in that estimation, will like ———, (who was but a boy, when I left London) boast of a connexion with me, which they never had. Had I the virtues, and graces, and accomplishments of St. Paul himself, I might have them at Olney, and nobody would care a button about me, yourself and one or two more excepted. Fame begets favour, and one talent, if it be rubbed a little bright by use and practice, will procure a man more friends than a thousand virtues. Dr. Johnson, (I believe) in the life of one of our poets, says, that he retired from the world flattering himself, that he should be regretted. But the world never missed him. I think his observation upon it is, that the vacancy made by the retreat of any individual, is soon filled up; that a man may always be obscure, if he chuses to be so; and that he, who neglects the world, will be by the world neglected.

Your mother and I walked yesterday in the wilderness. As we entered the gate, a glimpse of something white, contained in a little hole in the gate-post, caught my eye. I looked again, and discovered a bird's nest, with two tiny eggs in it. By and by they will be fledged, and tailed, and get wing-feathers, and fly. My case is somewhat similar to that of the parent bird. My nest is in a little nook. Here I brood, and hatch, and in due time my progeny takes wing and whistles.

We wait for the time of your coming with pleasant expectations. Yours truly.

LETTER LXVIII.

To Joseph Hill, Esq.

My dear Friend, June 25, 1785.

I WRITE in a nook, that I call my *boudoir*. It is a summer house not much bigger than a sedan chair, the door of which opens into the garden, that

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is now crowded with pinks, roses, and honey-suckles, and the window into my neighbour's orchard. It formerly served an apothecary, now dead, as a smoking room; and under my feet is a trap door, which once covered a hole in the ground, where he kept his bottles. At present, however, it is dedicated to sublimer uses. Having lined it with garden matts, and furnished it with a table and two chairs, here I write all, that I write in summer time, whether to my friends, or to the public. It is secure from all noise, and a refuge from all intrusion; for intruders sometimes trouble me in the winter evenings at Olney. But (thanks to my *boudoir!*) I can now hide myself from them. A poet's retreat is sacred. They acknowledge the truth of that proposition, and never presume to violate it.

The last sentence puts me in mind to tell you, that I have ordered my volume to your door. My bookseller is the most dilatory of all his fraternity, or you would have received it long since. It is more than a month since I returned him the last proof, and consequently since the printing was finished. I sent him the manuscript at the beginning of last November, that he might publish while the town was full, and he will hit the exact moment when it is entirely empty. Patience (you will perceive) is in no situation exempted from the severest trials; a remark that may serve to comfort you under the numberless trials of your own.

LETTER LXIX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear Friend, Aug. 27, 1785.

I was low in spirits yesterday, when your parcel came and raised them. Every proof of attention and regard to a man who lives in a vinegar bottle, is welcome from his friends on the outside of it—accordingly your books were welcome (you must not forget by the way, that I want the original, of which you have sent me the translation only) and the ruffles from Miss Shuttleworth most welcome. I am covetous, if ever man was, of living in the remembrance of absentees, whom I highly value and esteem, and consequently felt myself much gratified by her very obliging present. I have had more comfort, far more comfort, in the connexions that I have formed within the last twenty years, than in the more numerous ones that I had before.

Memorandum—The latter are almost all Unwins or Unwinisms.

You are entitled to my thanks also for the facetious engravings of John Gilpin. A serious poem is like a swan, it flies heavily, and never far; but a jest has the wings of a swallow, that never tire, and that carry it into every nook and corner. I am perfectly a stranger however to the reception, that my volume meets with, and (I believe) in respect of my *nonchalance* upon that subject, if authors would but copy so fair an example, am a most exemplary character. I must tell you nevertheless, that although the laurels that I gain at Olney will never minister much to my pride, I have acquired some. The Rev. Mr. S—— is my admirer, and thinks my second volume superior to my first. It ought to be so. If we do not improve by practice, then nothing can mend us; and a man has no more cause to be mortified at being told that he has excelled himself, than the elephant had, whose praise it was, that he was the greatest elephant in the world, himself excepted. If it be fair to judge of a book by an extract, I do not wonder, that you were so little edified by Johnson's Journal. It is even more ridiculous than was poor ——'s of flatulent memory. The portion of it, given to us in this day's paper, contains not one sentiment worth one farthing, except the last, in which he resolves to bind himself with no more unbidden obligations. Poor man! one would think, that to pray for his dead wife, and to pinch himself with church-fasts, had been almost the whole of his religion. I am sorry, that he, who was so manly an advocate for the cause of virtue in all other places, was so childishly employed, and so superstitiously too, in his closet. Had he studied his Bible more, to which, by his own confession, he was in great part a stranger, he had known better what use to make of his retired hours, and had trifled less. His lucubrations of this sort, have rather the appearance of religious dotage, than of any vigorous exertions towards God. It will be well if the publication prove not hurtful in its effects, by exposing the best cause, already too much despised,

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to ridicule still more profane. On the other side of the same paper, I find a long string of aphorisms, and maxims, and rules, for the conduct of life, which, though they appear not with his name, are so much in his manner, with the above mentioned, that I suspect them for his. I have not read them all, but several of them I read that were trivial enough: for the sake of one, however, I forgive him the rest—he advises never to banish hope entirely, because it is the cordial of life, although it be the greatest flatterer in the world. Such a measure of hope as may not endanger my peace by a disappointment, I would wish to cherish upon every subject, in which I am interested. But there lies the difficulty. A cure however, and the only one, for all the irregularities of hope and fear, is found in submission to the will of God. Happy they that have it!

This last sentence puts me in mind of your reference to Blair in a former letter, whom you there permitted to be your arbiter to adjust the respective claims of *who* or *that*. I do not rashly differ from so great a grammarian, nor do at any rate differ from him altogether —upon solemn occasions. God *who* heareth prayer, is right. Hector *who* saw Patroclus, is right. And the man *that* dresses me every day, is in my mind right also;—because the contrary would give an air of stiffness and pedantry to an expression that in respect of the matter of it, cannot be too negligently made up.

Adieu, my dear William! I have scribbled with all my might, which, breakfast-time excepted, has been my employment ever since I rose, and it is now past one. Yours.

LETTER LXX.

To Lady Hesketh.

My dear Cousin, Oct. 12, 1785.

It is no new thing with you to give pleasure. But I will venture to say, that you do not often give more than you gave me this morning. When I came down to breakfast, and found upon the table a letter franked by my uncle, and when opening that frank I found that it contained a letter from you, I said within myself—"This is just as it should be. "We are all grown young again, and the "days that I thought I should see no "more, are actually returned." You perceive, therefore, that you judged well when you conjectured, that a line from you would not be disagreeable to me. It could not be otherwise, than as in fact it proved, a most agreeable surprise, for I can truly boast of an affection for you, that neither years, nor interrupted intercourse, have at all abated. I need only recollect how much I valued you once, and with how much cause, immediately to feel a revival of the same value; if that can be said to revive, which at the most has only been dormant for want of employment. But I slander it when I say that it has slept. A thousand times have I recollected a thousand scenes, in which our two selves have formed the whole of the drama, with the greatest pleasure; at times too, when I had no reason to suppose, that I should ever hear from you again. I have laughed with you at the Arabian Night's Entertainment, which afforded us, as you well know, a fund of merriment that deserves never to be forgot. I have walked with you to Netley Abbey, and have scrambled with you over hedges in every direction, and many other feats we have performed together, upon the field of my remembrance, and all within these few years. Should I say within this twelvemonth, I should not transgress the truth. The hours, that I have spent with you, were among the pleasantest of my former days, and are therefore chronicled in my mind, so deeply as to fear no erasure. Neither do I forget my poor friend, Sir Thomas, I should remember him indeed, at any rate, on account of his personal kindness to myself, but the last testimony that he gave of his regard for you, endears him to me still more. With his uncommon understanding (for with many peculiarities he had more sense than any of his acquaintance) and with his generous sensibilities, it was hardly possible, that he should not distinguish you as he has done. As it was the last, so it was the best proof, that he could give, of a judgment that never deceived him, when he would allow himself leisure to consult it.

You say that you have often heard of me: that puzzles me. I cannot imagine from what quarter, but it is no matter. I must

I must tell you, however, my cousin, that your information has been a little defective. That I am happy in my situation is true; I live, and have lived these twenty years, with Mrs. Unwin, to whose affectionate care of me, during the far greater part of that time, it is (under Providence) owing, that I live at all. But I do not account myself happy in having been for thirteen of those years in a state of mind, that has made all that care and attention necessary; an attention, and a care, that have injured her health, and which, had she not been uncommonly supported, must have brought her to the grave. But I will pass to another subject; it would be cruel to particularize only to give pain, neither would I by any means give a sable hue to the first letter of a correspondence so unexpectedly renewed.

I am delighted with what you tell me of my uncle's good health. To enjoy any measure of cheerfulness at so late a day is much. But to have that late day enlivened with the vivacity of youth, is much more, and in these postdiluvian times, a rarity indeed. Happy for the most part are parents, who have daughters. Daughters are not apt to outlive their natural affections, which a son has generally survived, even before his boyish years are expired. I rejoice particularly in my uncle's felicity, who has three female descendants from his little person, who leave him nothing to wish for upon that head.

My dear cousin, dejection of spirits, which (I suppose) may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed. Manual occupations do not engage the mind sufficiently, as I know by experience, having tried many. But composition, especially of verse, absorbs it wholly. I write, therefore, generally three hours in a morning, and in an evening I transcribe. I read also, but less than I write, for I must have bodily exercise, and therefore never pass a day without it.

You ask me where I have been this summer. I answer at Olney. Should you ask me where I spent the last seventeen summers, I should still answer, at Olney. Ay, and the winters also, I have seldom left it, and except when I attended my brother in his last illness, never, I believe, a fortnight together.

Adieu, my beloved cousin. I shall not always be thus nimble in reply, but shall always have great pleasure in answering you when I can. Yours, my dear friend, and cousin.

LETTER LXXI.

To the same.

My dearest Cousin,

I am glad that I always loved you as I did. It releases me from any occasion to suspect, that my present affection for you, is indebted for its existence to any selfish considerations. No. I am sure I love you disinterestedly, and for your own sake, because I never thought of you, with any other sensations, than those of the truest affection, even while I was under the persuasion, that I should never hear from you again. But with my present feelings, superadded to those that I always had for you, I find it no easy matter to do justice to my sensations. I perceive myself in a state of mind, similar to that of the traveller, described in Pope's Messiah, who, as he passes through a sandy desert, starts at the sudden and unexpected sound of a waterfall. You have placed me in a situation new to me, and in which I feel myself somewhat puzzled how to behave. At the same time I would not grieve you, by putting a check upon your bounty, I would be as careful not to abuse it, as if I were a miser, and the question not about your money, but my own.

Although I do not suspect that a secret to you, my cousin, is any burthen, yet having maturely considered that point, since I wrote my last, I feel myself altogether disposed to release you from the injunction, to that effect, under which I laid you. I have now made such a progress in my translation, that I need neither fear that I shall stop short of the end, nor that any other rider of Pegasus should overtake me. Therefore, if at any time it should fall fairly in your way, or you should feel yourself invited to say, I am so occupied, you have my poetship's free permission. Dr. Johnson read, and recommended my first volume.

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

To the same.

Jan. 10, 1786.

It gave me great pleasure that you found my friend Unwin, what I was sure you would find him, a most agreeable man. I did not usher him in with the marrow-ones and cleavers of high-sounding panegyric, both because I was certain that whatsoever merit he had, your discernment would mark it, and because it is possible to do a man material injury, by making his praise his harbinger. It is easy to raise expectation to such a pitch, that the reality, be it ever so excellent, must necessarily fall below it.

I hold myself much indebted to Mr. ——, of whom I have the first information from yourself, both for his friendly disposition towards me, and for the manner in which he marks the defects in my volume. An author must be tender indeed to wince on being touched so gently. It is undoubtedly as he says, and as you and my uncle say, you cannot be all mistaken, neither is it at all probable that any of you should be so. I take it for granted therefore, that there are inequalities in the composition, and I do assure you, my dear, most faithfully, that if it should reach a second edition, I will spare no pains to improve it. It may serve me for an agreeable amusement, perhaps, when Homer shall be gone, and done with. The first edition of poems has generally been susceptible of improvement. Pope, I believe, never published one in his life that did not undergo variations, and his longest pieces many. I will only observe, that inequalities there must be always, and in every work of length. There are level parts of every subject, parts which we cannot with propriety attempt to elevate. They are by nature humble, and can only be made to assume an awkward and uncouth appearance by being mounted. But again I take it for granted, that this remark does not apply to the matter of your objection. You were sufficiently aware of it before, and have no need that I should suggest it as an apology, could it have served that office, but would have made it for me yourself. In truth, my dear, had you known in what anguish of mind I wrote the whole of that poems and under what perpetual interruption, from a cause, that has since been removed, so that sometimes I had not an opportunity of writing more than three lines at a sitting, you would long since have wondered as much as I do myself, that it turned out any thing better than Grub-street.

My cousin, give yourself no trouble to find out any of the magi to scrutinize my Homer. I can do without them; and if I were not conscious that I have no need of their help, I would be the first to call for it. Assure yourself that I intend to be careful to the utmost line of all possible caution, both with respect to language and versification. I will not send a verse to the press, that shall not have undergone the strictest examination.

A subscription is surely on every account the most eligible mode of publication. When I shall have emptied the purses of my friends, and of their friends, into my own, I am still free to levy contributions upon the world at large, and I shall then have a fund to defray the expences of a new edition. I have ordered Johnson to print the proposals immediately, and hope that they will kiss your hands before the week is expired.

I have had the kindest letter from Josephus that I ever had. He mentioned my purpose to one of the masters of Eton, who replied, that "such a work "is much wanted." Affectionately yours.

LETTER LXXIII.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear William, Jan. 14, 1786.

I am glad that you have seen Lady Hesketh. I knew that you would find her every thing that is amiable and elegant. Else, being my relation, I would never have shewn her to you. She also was delighted with her visitor, and expects the greatest pleasure in seeing you again; but is under some apprehensions, that a tender regard for the drum of your ear, may keep you from her. Never

mind that! You have two drums, and if she should crack both, I will buy you a trumpet.

General Cowper having much pressed me to accompany my proposals with a specimen, I have sent him one. It is taken from the twenty-fourth book of the Iliad, and is part of the interview between Priam and Achilles. Tell me, if it be possible for any man to tell me —why did Homer leave off at the burial of Hector? Is it possible, that he could be determined to it by a conceit, so little worthy of him, as that, having made the number of his books completely the alphabetical number, he would not, for the joke's sake, proceed any farther? Why did he not give us the death of Achilles, in the destruction of Troy? Tell me also, if the critics, with Aristotle at their head, have not found, that he left off exactly where he should, and that every epic poem to all generations, is bound to conclude with the burial of Hector? I do not in the least doubt it. Therefore, if I live to write a dozen epic poems, I will always take care to bury Hector, and to bring all matters at that point to an immediate conclusion.

I had a truly kind letter from Mr. ———, written immediately on his recovery from the fever. I am bound to honour James's powder, not only for the services it has often rendered to myself, but still more, for having been the means of preserving a life ten times more valuable to society, than mine is ever likely to be.

You say—"Why should I trouble you "with my troubles?" I answer,—"Why "not? What is a friend good for, if we "may not lay one end of the sack upon "his shoulders, while we ourselves carry "the other?"

You see your duty to God, and your duty to your neighbour; and you practise both, with your best ability. Yet a certain person accounts you blind. I would that all the world were so blind even as you are. But there are some in it, who, like the Chinese, say—"We have "two eyes; and other nations have but "one!" I am glad however, that in your one eye, you have sight enough to discover, that such censures are not worth minding.

I thank you heartily for every step you take in the advancement of my present purpose.

Contrive to pay Lady H. a long visit, for she has a thousand things to say. Yours, my dear William.

LETTER LXXIV.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, Jan. 31, 1786.

It is very pleasant, my dearest cousin, to receive a present, so delicately conveyed as that which I received so lately from Anonymous; but it is also very painful to have nobody to thank for it. I find myself therefore driven by stress of necessity to the following resolutions, viz. that I will constitute you my thanks-receiver general, for whatsoever gift I shall receive hereafter, as well as for those that I have already received from a nameless benefactor. I therefore thank you, my cousin, for a most elegant present, including the most elegant compliment that ever poet was honoured with; for a snuff box of tortoise-shell, with a beautiful landscape on the lid of it, glazed with chrystal, having the figures of three hares in the fore-ground, and inscribed above with these words, *The peasant's nest*—and below with these—*Tiny Puss, and Bess*. For all and every of these I thank you, and also for standing proxy on this occasion. Nor must I forget to thank you that so soon after I had sent you the first letter of Anonymous, I received another in the same hand.—There! Now I am a little easier.

I have almost conceived a design to send up half a dozen stout country fellows to tie by the leg to their respective bed-posts the company, that so abridges your opportunity of writing to me. Your letters are the joy of my heart, and I cannot endure to be robbed, by I know not whom, of half my treasure. But there is no comfort without a drawback, and therefore it is, that I, who have unknown friends, have unknown enemies also. Ever since I wrote last, I find myself in better health, and my nocturnal spasms, and fever considerably abated. I intend to write to Dr. Kerr on Thursday, that I may gratify him with an account of my amendment: for to him

him I know, that it will be a gratification. Were he not a physician, I should regret that he lives so distant, for he is a most agreeable man; but being what he is, it would be impossible to have his company, even if he were a neighbour, unless in time of sickness, at which time whatever charms he might have himself, my own must necessarily lose much of their effect on him.

When I write to you, my dear, what I have already related to the General, I am always fearful lest I should tell you that for news with which you are well acquainted. For once, however, I will venture—On Wednesday last, I received from Johnson the MS copy of a specimen that I had sent to the General, and inclosed in the same cover notes upon it by an unknown critic. Johnson, in a short letter, recommended him to me as a man of unquestionable learning and ability. On perusal and consideration of his remarks, I found him such, and having nothing so much at heart as to give all possible security to yourself and the General that my work shall not come forth unfinished, I answered Johnson that I would gladly submit my MS to his friend. He is, in truth, a very clever fellow, perfectly a stranger to me, and one who I promise you will not spare for severity of animadversion where he shall find occasion. It is impossible for you, my dearest cousin, to express a wish that I do not equally feel a wish to gratify. You are desirous, that Maty should see a book of my Homer, and for that reason, if Maty will see a book of it, he shall be welcome, although time is likely to be precious, and consequently any delay, that is not absolutely necessary, as much as possible to be avoided. I am now revising the Iliad. It is a business that will cost me four months, perhaps five; for I compare the very words as I go, and if much alteration should occur, must transcribe the whole. The first book I have almost transcribed already. To these five months Johnson says, that nine more must be added for printing, and upon my own experience, I will venture to assure you, that the tardiness of printers will make those nine months twelve. There is danger therefore, that my subscribers may think, that I make them wait too long, and that they, who know me not, may suspect a bubble. How glad shall I be to read it over in an evening, book by book, as fast as I settle the copy, to you, and to Mrs. Unwin! She has been my touchstone always, and without reference to her taste, and judgment, I have printed nothing. With one of you at each elbow, I should think myself the happiest of all poets.

The General and I, having broken the ice, are upon the most comfortable terms of correspondence. He writes very affectionately to me, and I say every thing to him, that comes uppermost. I could not write frequently to any creature living, upon any other terms than those. He tells me of infirmities that he has, which make him less active than he was. I am sorry to hear that he has any such. Alas! alas! he was young when I saw him, only twenty years ago.

I have the most affectionate letter imaginable from Colman, who writes to me like a brother. The chancellor is yet dumb.

May God have you in his keeping, my beloved cousin. Farewel.

LETTER LXXV.

To the same.

Olney, Feb. 9, 1786.

My dearest Cousin,

I HAVE been impatient to tell you, that I am impatient to see you again. Mrs. Unwin partakes with me in all my feelings upon this subject, and longs also to see you. I should have told you so by the last post, but have been so completely occupied by this tormenting specimen, that it was impossible to do it. I sent the General a letter on Monday, that would distress and alarm him; I sent him another yesterday, that will, I hope, quiet him again. Johnson has apologized very civilly for the multitude of his friend's strictures; and his friend has promised to confine himself, in future, to a comparison of me with the original, so that (I doubt not) we shall jog on merrily together. And now, my dear, let me tell you once more, that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will shew you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, every thing that I

have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors but we could easily accommodate them all, though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because, before that time, my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with matts, and spread the floor with matts; and there you shall sit, with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention, the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box, in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand, stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made. But, a merciless servant having scrubbed it, until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy, as the day is long. Order yourself, my cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him, whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be any thing better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.

Adieu! my dearest, dearest cousin.

LETTER LXXVI.

To the same.

Olney, Feb. 11, 1786.

My dearest Cousin,

IT must be (I suppose) a fortnight or thereabout, since I wrote last, I feel myself so alert and so ready to write again. Be that as it may, here I come. We talk of nobody but you. What we will do with you when we get you, where you shall walk, where you shall sleep, in short every thing that bears the remotest relation to your well being at Olney, occupies all our talking time, which is all that I do not spend at Troy.

I have every reason for writing to you as often as I can, but I have a particular reason for doing it now. I want to tell you, that by the diligence on Wednesday next, I mean to send you a quire of my Homer for Maty's perusal. It will contain the first book, and as much of the second as brings us to the catalogue of the ships, and is every morsel of the revised copy that I have transcribed. My dearest cousin, read it yourself, let the General read it, do what you please with it, so that it reach Johnson in due time. But let Maty be the only *Critic* that has any thing to do with it. The vexation, the perplexity, that attends a multiplicity of criticisms by various hands, many of which are sure to be futile, many of them ill-founded, and some of them contradictory to others, is inconceivable, except by the author, whose ill-fated work happens to be the subject of them. This also appears to me self-evident, that if a work have past under the review of one man of taste and learning, and have had the good fortune to please him, his approbation gives security for that of all others qualified like himself. I speak thus, my dear, after having just escaped from such a storm of trouble, occasioned by endless remarks, hints, suggestions, and objections, as drove me almost to despair, and to the very verge of a resolution to drop my undertaking for ever.

With

With infinite difficulty I at last sifted the chaff from the wheat, availed myself of what appeared to me to be just, and rejected the rest, but not till the labour and anxiety had nearly undone all that Kerr had been doing for me. My beloved cousin, trust me for it, as you safely may, that temper, vanity, and self-importance, had nothing to do in all this distress that I suffered. It was merely the effect of an alarm that I could not help taking, when I compared the great trouble I had with a few lines only, thus handled, with that which I foresaw such handling of the whole must necessarily give me. I felt before-hand that my constitution would not bear it. I shall send up this second specimen in a box, that I have had made on purpose; and when Maty has done with the copy, and you have done with it yourself, then you must return it in said box to my translatorship. Though Johnson's friend has teazed me sadly, I verily believe, that I shall have no more such cause to complain of him. We now understand one another, and I firmly believe, that I might have gone the world through before I had found his equal in an accurate and familiar acquaintance with the original.

A letter to Mr. Urban in the last Gentleman's magazine, of which I's book is the subject, pleases me more than any thing I have seen in the way of eulogium yet. I have no guess of the author.

I do not wish to remind the Chancellor of his promise. Ask you why, my cousin? Because I suppose it would be impossible. He has no doubt forgotten it entirely, and would be obliged to take my word for the truth of it, which I could not bear. We drank tea together with Mrs. C——e, and her sister, in King-street, Bloomsbury, and there was the promise made. I said—"Thurlow, "I am nobody, and shall be always "nobody, and you will be chancel-"lor. You shall provide for me when "you are." He smiled, and replied, "I surely will." "These ladies," said I, "are witnesses." He still smiled, and said—"Let them be so, for I will cer-"tainly do it." But alas! twenty-four years have passed since the day of the date thereof; and to mention it now would be to upbraid him with inattention to his plighted troth. Neither do I suppose, that he could easily serve such a creature as I am, if he would.

Adieu, whom I love entirely.

LETTER LXXVII.

To the same.

Olney, Feb. 19, 1785.

My dearest Cousin,

SINCE so it must be, so it shall be. If you will not sleep under the roof of a friend, may you never sleep under the roof of an enemy? An enemy however you will not presently find. Mrs. Unwin bids me mention her affectionately, and tell you, that she willingly gives up a part, for the sake of the rest, willingly, at least, as far as willingly may consist with some reluctance: I feel my reluctance too. Our design was that you should have slept in the room that serves me for a study, and its having been occupied by you, would have been an additional recommendation of it to me. But all reluctances are superseded by the thought of seeing you; and because we have nothing so much at heart, as the wish to see you happy and comfortable, we are desirous therefore, to accommodate you to your own mind, and not to ours. Mrs. Unwin has already secured for you an apartment, or rather two, just such as we could wish. The house in which you will find them, is within thirty yards of our own, and opposite to it. The whole affair is thus commodiously adjusted; and now I have nothing to do but to wish for June; and June, my cousin, was never so wished for, since June was made. I shall have a thousand things to hear, and a thousand to say, and they will all rush into my mind together, till it will be so crowded, with things impatient to be said, that for some time I shall say nothing. But no matter—sooner or later they will all come out; and since we shall have you the longer for not having you under our own roof, (a circumstance, that more than any thing, reconciles us to that measure) they will stand the better chance. After so long a separation, a separation, that of late seemed likely to last for life, we shall meet each other as alive from the dead, and for my own part, I can truly say, that I have not a friend in the other world, whose resurrection would give me greater pleasure.

I am truly happy, my dear, in having pleased you with what you have seen of my Homer. I wish that all English rea-

ders, had your unsophisticated, or rather unadulterated taste, and could relish simplicity like you. But I am well aware, that in this respect, I am under a disadvantage, and that many, especially many ladies, missing many turns and prettinesses of expression, that they have admired in Pope, will account my translation in those particulars defective. But I comfort myself with the thought, that in reality it is no defect, on the contrary, that the want of all such embellishments as do not belong to the original, will be one of its principal merits with persons indeed capable of relishing Homer. He is the best poet that ever lived for many reasons, but for none more than for that majestic plainness that distinguishes him from all others. As an accomplished person moves gracefully without thinking of it, in like manner the dignity of Homer seems to cost him no labour. It was natural to him to say great things, and to say them well, and little ornaments were beneath his notice. If Maty, my dearest cousin, should return to you my copy with any such strictures as may make it necessary for me to see it again, before it goes to Johnson, in that case you shall send it to me, otherwise to Johnson immediately; for he writes me word, he wishes his friend to go to work upon it as soon as possible. When you come, my dear, we will hang all these critics together. For they have worried me without remorse or conscience. At least one of them has. I had actually murthered more than a few of the best lines in the specimen, in compliance with his requisitions, but plucked up my courage at last, and in the very last opportunity that I had, recovered them to life again by restoring the original reading. At the same time I readily confess that the specimen is the better for all this discipline its author has undergone, but then it has been more indebted for its improvement to that pointed accuracy of examination, to which I was myself excited, than to any proposed amendments from Mr. Critic; for as sure as you are my cousin, whom I long to see at Olney, so surely would he have done me irreparable mischief, if I would have given him leave.

My friend Bagot writes to me in a most friendly strain, and calls loudly upon me for original poetry. When I shall have done with Homer, probably he will not call in vain. Having found the prime feather of a swan on the banks of the *smug and silver Trent*, he keeps it for me. Adieu, dear cousin.

I am sorry that the General has such indifferent health. He must not die. I can by no means spare a person so kind to me.

LETTER LXXVIII.

To the Rev. Walter Bagot.

Olney, Feb. 27, 1786.

Alas! alas! my dear, dear friend, may God himself comfort you! I will not be so absurd as to attempt it. By the close of your letter it should seem, that in this hour of great trial he withholds not his consolations from you. I know by experience, that they are neither few nor small; and though I feel for you as I never felt for man before, yet do I sincerely rejoice in this, that whereas there is but one true comforter in the universe, under afflictions such as yours, you both know him, and know where to seek him. I thought you a man the most happily mated, that I had ever seen, and had great pleasure in your felicity. Pardon me, if now I feel a wish, that, short as my acquaintance with her was, I had never seen her. I should have mourned with you, but not as I do now. Mrs. Unwin sympathizes with you also most sincerely, and you neither are, nor will be soon forgotten in such prayers as we can make at Olney. I will not detain you longer now, my poor afflicted friend, than to commit you to the tender mercy of God, and to bid you a sorrowful adieu!

Adieu! ever yours.

LETTER LXXIX.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, March 6, 1786.

My dearest Cousin,

Your opinion has more weight with me than that of all the critics in the world; and to give you a proof of it, I make you a concession, that I would hardly have made to them all united. I do not indeed absolutely covenant, promise, and agree, that I will discard all my elisions, but I hereby bind myself to dismiss as many of them, as without sacrificing

crificing energy to sound, I can. It is incumbent upon me in the mean time to say something in justification of the few, that I shall retain, that I may not seem a poet mounted rather on a mule than on Pegasus. In the first place, *The*, is a barbarism. We are indebted for it to the Celts, or the Goths, or to the Saxons, or perhaps to them all. In the two best languages that ever were spoken, the Greek and the Latin, there is no similar incumbrance of expression to be found. Secondly, The perpetual use of it in our language, is to us miserable poets, attended with two great inconveniences. Our verse consisting only of ten syllables, it not unfrequently happens, that the fifth part of a line is to be engrossed, and necessarily too, unless elision prevents it, by this abominable intruder, and, which is worse in my account, open vowels are continually the consequence —*The* element—*The* air, &c. Thirdly, The French, who are equally with the English chargeable with barbarism in this particular, dispose of their *Le* and their *La* without ceremony, and always take care, that they shall be absorbed both in verse and in prose in the vowel, that immediately follows them. Fourthly, and I believe lastly, (and for your sake I wish it may prove so) the practice of cutting short *The* is warranted by Milton, who of all English poets that ever lived, had certainly the finest ear. Dr. Warton indeed has dared to say, that he had a bad one, for which he deserves, as far as critical demerit can deserve it, to lose his own. I thought I had done, but there is still a fifthly behind; and it is this, That the custom of abbreviating *The*, belongs to the style in which, in my advertisement annexed to the specimen, I profess to write. The use of that style would have warranted me in the practice of much greater liberty of this sort, than I ever intended to take. In perfect consistence with that style, I might say, I' th' tempest, I' th' door-way, &c. which however I would not allow myself to do, because I was aware that it would be objected to, and with reason. But it seems to me for the causes above said, that when I shorten *the*, before a vowel, or before *wh*, as in the line you mention,

"Than th' whole broad Hellespont in all its parts."

my licence is not equally exceptionable, because *W*, though he rank as a consonant, in the word *whole*, is not allowed to announce himself to the ear; and *H* is an aspirate. But as I said at the beginning, so say I still, I am most willing to conform myself to your very sensible observation, that it is necessary, if we would please, to consult the taste of our own day; neither would I have pelted you, my dearest cousin, with any part of this volley of good reasons, had I not designed them as an answer to those objections, which you say, you have heard from others. But I only mention them. Though satisfactory to myself, I wave them, and will allow to *The* his whole dimensions, whensoever it can be done.

Thou only critic of my verse that is to be found in all the earth, whom I love, what shall I say in answer to your own objection to that passage,

"Softly he placed his hand
"On the old man's hand, and pushed it gently
"away."

I can say neither more nor less than this, that when our dear friend, the General, sent me his opinion on the specimens quoting those very words from it, he added, "With this part I was particu-"larly pleased: there is nothing in poetry "more descriptive." Such were his very words. Taste, my dear, is various, there is nothing so various, and even between persons of the best taste, there are diversities of opinion on the same subject, for which it is not possible to account. So much for these matters.

You advise me to consult the General, and to confide in him. I follow your advice, and have done both. By the last post I asked his permission to send him the books of my Homer, as fast as I should finish them off. I shall be glad of his remarks, and more glad than of any thing, to do that which I hope may be agreeable to him. They will of course pass into your hands before they are sent to Johnson. The quire that I sent, is now in the hands of Johnson's friend. I intended to have told you in my last, but forgot it, that Johnson behaves very handsomely in the affair of my two volumes. He acts with a liberality not often found in persons of his occupation, and to mention it, when occasion calls me to it, is a justice due to him.

I am very much pleased with Mr. Stanley's letter—several compliments were paid me, on the subject of that first volume, by my own friends, but I do not recollect that I ever knew the opinion of a stranger about it before, whether favourable or otherwise; I only heard by a side wind, that it was very much read in Scotland, and more than here.

Farewell, my dearest cousin, whom we expect, of whom we talk continually, and whom we continually long for.

LETTER LXXX.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear Friend, March 13, 1786.

I SEEM to be about to write to you, but I foresee that it will not be a letter, but a scrap that I shall send you. I could tell you things, that knowing how much you interest yourself in my success, I am sure would please you, but every moment of my leisure is necessarily spent at Troy. I am revising my translation, and bestowing on it more labour than at first. At the repeated solicitation of General Cowper, who had doubtless irrefragable reason on his side, I have put my book into the hands of the most extraordinary critic that I have ever heard of. He is a Swiss; has an accurate knowledge of English, and for his knowledge of Homer, has, I verily believe, no fellow. Johnson recommended him to me. I am to send him the quires as fast as I finish them off, and the first is now in his hands. I have the comfort to be able to tell you, that he is very much pleased with what he has seen. Johnson wrote to me lately on purpose to tell me. Things having taken this turn, I fear that I must beg a release from my engagement to put the MS into your hands. I am bound to print as soon as three hundred shall have subscribed, and consequently have not an hour to spare.

People generally love to go where they are admired, yet Lady Hesketh complains of not having seen you. Yours,

LETTER LXXXI.

To Lady Hesketh.

Olney, April 17, 1786.

My dearest Cousin,

IF you will not quote Solomon, my dearest cousin, I will. He says, and as beautifully as truly—"Hope deferred "maketh the heart sick, but when the "desire cometh, it is a tree of life!" I feel how much reason he had on his side when he made this observation, and am myself sick of your fortnight's delay.

* * * * * *

The vicarage was built by Lord Dartmouth, and was not finished till some time after we arrived at Olney, consequently it is new. It is a smart stone building, well sashed by much too good for the living, but just what I would wish for you. It has, as you justly concluded from my premises, a garden, but rather calculated for use than ornament. It is square, and well walled, but has neither arbour, nor alcove, nor other shade, except the shadow of the house. But we have two gardens, which are yours. Between your mansion and ours is interposed nothing but an orchard, into which a door opening out of our garden, affords us the easiest communication imaginable, will save the round about by the town, and make both houses one. Your chamber-windows look over the river, and over the meadows, to a village called Emberton, and command the whole length of a long bridge, described by a certain poet, together with a view of the road at a distance. Should you wish for books at Olney, you must bring them with you, or you will wish in vain, for I have none but the works of a certain poet, Cowper, of whom perhaps you have heard, and they are as yet but two volumes. They may multiply hereafter, but at present they are no more.

You are the first person for whom I have heard Mrs. Unwin express such feelings as she does for you. She is not profuse in professions, nor forward to enter into treaties of friendship with new faces, but when her friendship is once engaged, it may be confided in, even unto death. She loves you already, and how much more will she love you, before this

this time twelve-month! I have indeed endeavoured to describe you to her, but perfectly as I have you by heart, I am sensible that my picture cannot do you justice. I never saw one that did. Be you what you may, you are much beloved, and will be so at Olney, and Mrs. U. expects you, with the pleasure, that one feels at the return of a long absent, dear relation; that is to say, with a pleasure such as mine. She sends you her warmest affections.

On Friday, I received a letter from dear Anonymous, apprising me of a parcel, that the coach would bring me on Saturday. Who is there in the world that has, or thinks he has reason to love me to the degree that he does? But it is no matter. He chooses to be unknown, and his choice is, and ever shall be, so sacred to me, that if his name lay on the table before me reversed, I would not turn the paper about, that I might read it. Much as it would gratify me to thank him, I would turn my eyes away from the forbidden discovery. I long to assure him that those same eyes, concerning which he expresses such kind apprehensions, lest they should suffer by this laborious undertaking, are as well as I could expect them to be; if I were never to touch either book or pen. Subject to weakness, and occasional slight inflammations, it is probable that they will always be, but I cannot remember the time when they enjoyed any thing so like an exemption from those infirmities as at present. One would almost suppose, that reading Homer were the best ophthalmic in the world. I should be happy to remove his solicitude on the subject, but it is a pleasure that he will not let me enjoy. Well then, I will be content without it; and so content, that though I believe you, my dear, to be in full possession of all this mystery, you shall never know me, while you live, either directly, or by hints of any sort, attempt to extort, or to steal the secret from you. I should think myself as justly punishable as the Bethshemites, for looking into the ark, which they were not allowed to touch.

I have not sent for Kerr, for Kerr can do nothing but send me to Bath, and to Bath I cannot go for a thousand reasons. The summer will set me up again; I grow fat every day and shall be as big as Gog or Magog, or both put together, before you come.

I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor, that is to say, I slept three years in his house, but I lived, that is to say, I spent my days in Southampton-Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future Lord Chancellor, constantly employed from morning to night in giggling, and making giggle, instead of studying the law. Oh fie, cousin! how could you do so? I am pleased with Lord Thurlow's inquiries about me. If he takes it into that inimitable head of his, he may make a man of me yet. I could love him heartily, if he would deserve it at my hands. That I did so once is certain. The Dutchess of ——, who in the world set her a going? But if all the dutchesses in the world were spinning, like so many whirligigs, for my benefit, I would not stop them. It is a noble thing to be a poet, it makes all the world so lively. I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did, and better, and the world would have been still fast asleep; but a volume of verse is a fiddle, that puts the universe in motion. Yours, my dear friend, and cousin.

LETTER LXXXII.

To the same.

Olney, April 24, 1786.

YOUR letters are so much my comfort, that I often tremble, lest by any accident I should be disappointed; and the more because you have been, more than once, so engaged in company on the writing day, that I have had a narrow escape. Let me give you a piece of good counsel, my cousin: Follow my laudable example, write when you can, take Time's forelock in one hand, and a pen in the other, and so make sure of your opportunity. It is well for me that you write faster than any body, and more in an hour, than other people in two, else I know not what would become of me. When I read your letters, I hear you talk, and I love talking letters dearly, especially from you. Well! the middle of June will not be always a thousand years off, and when it comes I shall hear you, and see you too,

too, and shall not care a farthing then if you do not touch a pen in a month. By the way, you must either send me, or bring me some more paper, for before the moon shall have performed a few more revolutions, I shall not have a scrap left, and tedious revolutions they are just now, that is certain.

I give you leave to be as peremptory as you please, especially at a distance; but when you say that you are a Cowper, (and the better it is for the Cowpers that such you are, and I give them joy of you, with all my heart) you must not forget, that I boast myself a Cowper too, and have my humours, and fancies, and purposes, and determinations, as well as others of my name, and hold them as fast as they can. *You* indeed tell *me* how often I shall see you when you come. A pretty story truly. I am an *he* Cowper, my dear, and claim the privileges that belong to my noble sex. But these matters shall be settled, as my cousin Agamemnon used to say, at a more convenient time.

I shall rejoice to see the letter you promise me, for though I met with a morsel of praise last week, I do not know that the weak current is likely to produce me any, and having lately been pretty much pampered with that diet, I expect to find myself rather hungry by the time when your next letter shall arrive. It will therefore be very opportune. The morsel, above alluded to, came from—whom do you think? From ———, but she desires that her authorship may be a secret. And in my answer, I promised not to divulge it, except to you. It is a pretty copy of verses, neatly written, and well turned, and when you come, you shall see them. I intend to keep all pretty things to myself till then, that they may serve me as a bait to lure you hither more effectually. The last letter that I had from ———, I received so many years since, that it seems as if it had reached me a good while before I was born.

I was grieved at the heart that the General could not come, and that illness was in part the cause that hindered him. I have sent him by his express desire, a new edition of the first book, and half the second. He would not suffer me to send it to you, my dear, lest you should post it away to Maty at once. He did not give that reason, but being shrewd I found it.

The grass begins to grow, and the leaves to bud, and every thing is preparing to be beautiful, against you come. Adieu!

You enquire of our walks, I perceive, as well as our rides. They are beautiful. You enquire also concerning a cellar. You have two cellars: Oh! what years have passed since we took the same walks, and drank out of the same bottle! but a few more weeks and then!

LETTER LXXXIII.

To the same.

Olney, May 15, 1786.

My dearest Cousin,

From this very morning I begin to date the last month of our long separation, and confidently and most comfortably hope, that before the fifteenth of June shall present itself, we shall have seen each other. Is it not so? And will it not be one of the most extraordinary eras of my extraordinary life? A year ago, we neither corresponded, nor expected to meet in this world. But this world is a scene of marvellous events, many of them more marvellous than fiction itself would dare to hazard; and (blessed be God!) they are not all of the distressing kind. Now and then in the course of an existence, whose hue is for the most part sable, a day turns up, that makes amends for many sighs and many subjects of complaint. Such a day shall I account the day of your arrival at Olney.

Wherefore is it, (canst thou tell me?) that together with all those delightful sensations, to which the sight of a long absent dear friend gives birth, there is a mixture of something painful, flutterings, and tumults, and I know not what accompaniments of our pleasure, that are in fact perfectly foreign from the occasion! Such I feel, when I think of our meeting, and such, I suppose, feel you; and the nearer the crisis approaches, the more I am sensible of them. I know, beforehand, that they will increase with every turn of the wheels, that shall convey me to Newport,

port, when I shall set out to meet you, and that when we actually meet, the pleasure, and this unaccountable pain together, will be as much as I shall be able to support. I am utterly at a loss for the cause, and can only resolve it into that appointment, by which it has been fore-ordained, that all human delights shall be qualified and mingled with their contraries. For there is nothing formidable in you. To me at least there is nothing such, no, not even in your menaces, unless when you threaten me to write no more. Nay, I verily believe, did I not know you to be what you are, and had less affection for you than I have, I should have fewer of these emotions, of which I would have none, if I could help it. But a fig for them all! Let us resolve to combat with, and to conquer them. They are dreams. They are illusions of the judgment. Some enemy, that hates the happiness of human kind, and is ever industrious to dash it, works them in us; and their being so perfectly unreasonable as they are is a proof of it. Nothing, that is such, can be the work of a good agent. This I know too by experience, that, like all other illusions, they exist only by force of imagination, are indebted for their prevalence to the absence of their object, and in a few moments after its appearance cease. So then this is a settled point, and the case stands thus. You will tremble as you draw near to Newport, and so shall I. But we will both recollect, that there is no reason why we should, and this recollection will, at least, have some little effect in our favour. We will likewise both take the comfort of what we know to be true, that the tumult will soon cease, and the pleasure long survive the pain, even as long, I trust, as we ourselves shall survive it.

What you say of Maty gives me all the consolation that you intended. We both think it highly probable that you suggest the true cause of his displeasure, when you suppose him mortified at not having had a part of the translation laid before him, ere the specimen was published. The General was very much hurt, and calls his censures harsh and unreasonable. He likewise sent me a consolatory letter on the occasion, in which he took the kindest pains to heal the wound, that (he supposed) I might have suffered. I am not naturally insensible, and the sensibilities that I had by nature, have been wonderfully enhanced by a long series of shocks, given to a frame of nerves that was never very athletic. I feel accordingly, whether painful or pleasant, in the extreme, am easily elevated, and easily cast down. The frown of a critic freezes my poetical powers, and discourages me, to a degree, that makes me ashamed of my own weakness. Yet I presently recover my confidence again. The half of what you so kindly say in your last, would at any time restore my spirits, and, being said by you, is infallible. I am not ashamed to confess, that having commenced an author, I am most abundantly desirous to succeed as such. *I have (what perhaps you little suspect me of) in my nature an infinite share of ambition.* But with it, I have at the same time, as you well know, an equal share of diffidence. To this combination of opposite qualities it has been owing, that till lately, I stole through life without undertaking any thing, yet always wishing to distinguish myself. At last I ventured, ventured too in the only path that, at so late a period, was yet open to me, and am determined, if God have not determined otherwise, to work my way through the obscurity, that has been so long my portion, into notice. Every thing, therefore, that seems to threaten this my favourite purpose with disappointment, affects me nearly. I suppose that all ambitious minds are in the same predicament. He who seeks distinction must be sensible of disapprobation, exactly in the same proportion as he desires applause. And now, my precious cousin, I have unfolded my heart to you in this particular, without a speck of dissimulation. Some people, and good people too, would blame me. But you will not; and they (I think) would blame without just cause. We certainly do not honour God, when we bury, or when we neglect to improve, as far as we may, whatever talent he may have bestowed on us, whether it be little or much. In natural things, as well as in spiritual, it is a never-failing truth, that to him, who *hath*, (that is to him who occupies what he hath diligently and so as to encrease it) more shall be given. Set me down therefore, my dear, for an industrious rhymer, so long

long as I shall have the ability. For in this only way, is it possible for me, so far as I can see, either to honour God, or to serve man, or even to serve myself.

I rejoice to hear that Mr. Throckmorton wishes to be on a more intimate footing. I am shy, and suspect that he is not very much otherwise, and the consequence has been, that we have mutually wished an acquaintance without being able to accomplish it. Blessings on you for the hint, that you dropped on the subject of the house at Weston! For the burthen of my song is—"Since "we have met once again, let us never "be separated, as we have been, more."

LETTER LXXXIV.

To the same.

Olney, May 25, 1786.

I HAVE at length, my cousin, found my way into my summer abode. I believe that I described it to you some time since, and will therefore now leave it undescribed. I will only say that I am writing in a band-box, situated, at least in my account, delightfully, because it has a window in one side that opens into that orchard, through which, as I am sitting here, I shall see you often pass, and which therefore I already prefer to all the orchards in the world. You do well to prepare me for all possible delays, because in this life all sorts of disappointments are possible, and I shall do well, if any such delay of your journey should happen, to practise that lesson of patience which you inculcate. But it is a lesson, which, even with you for my teacher, I shall be slow to learn. Being sure however that you will not procrastinate without cause, I will make myself as easy as I can about it, and hope the best. To convince you how much I am under discipline, and good advice, I will lay aside a favourite measure, influenced in doing so by nothing but the good sense of your contrary opinion. I had set my heart on meeting you at Newport. In my haste to see you once again, I was willing to overlook many awkwardnesses I could not but foresee would attend it. I put them aside so long as I only foresaw them myself, but since I find that you foresee them too, I can no longer deal so slightly with them. It is therefore determined that we meet at Olney. Much I shall feel, but I will not die if I can help it, and I beg that you will take all possible care to outlive it likewise, for I know what it is to be balked in the moment of acquisition, and should be loth to know it again.

Last Monday in the evening we walked to Weston, according to our usual custom. It happened, owing to a mistake of time, that we set out half an hour sooner than usual. This mistake we discovered, while we were in the wilderness. So, finding that we had time before us, as they say, Mrs. Unwin proposed, that we should go into the village, and take a view of the house, that I had just mentioned to you. We did so, and found it such a one as in most respects would suit you well. But Moses Brown, our vicar, who, as I told you, is in his eighty-sixth year, is not bound to die for that reason. He said himself, when he was here last summer, that he should live ten years longer, and for aught that appears so he may. In which case, for the sake of its near neighbourhood to us, the vicarage has charms for me that no other place can rival. But this, and a thousand things more, shall be talked over when you come.

We have been industriously cultivating our acquaintance with our Weston neighbours since I wrote last, and they on their part have been equally diligent in the same cause. I have a notion that we shall all suit well. I see much in them both that I admire. You know perhaps that they are Catholics.

It is a delightful bundle of praise, my cousin, that you have sent me. All jasmine and lavender. Whoever the lady is, she has evidently an admirable pen, and a cultivated mind. If a person reads, it is no matter in what language, and if the mind be informed, it is no matter whether that mind belongs to a man or a woman. The taste, and the judgment, will receive the benefit alike in both. Long before the Task was published, I made an experiment one day, being in a frolicksome mood,

upon

upon my friend:—We were walking in the garden, and conversing on a subject similar to these lines—

The few that pray at all, pray oft' amiss,
And seeking grace t'improve the present good,
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

I repeated them, and said to him with an air of *nonchalance*, "Do you recollect those lines? I have seen them somewhere, where are they?" He put on a considering face, and after some deliberation replied—"Oh, I will tell you where they must be—in the Night-Thoughts." I was glad my trial turned out so well, and did not undeceive him. I mention this occurrence only in confirmation of the letter-writer's opinion, but at the same time I do assure you, on the faith of an honest man, that I never in my life designed an imitation of Young, or of any other writer; for mimicry is my abhorrence, at least in poetry.

Assure yourself, my dearest cousin, that both for your sake, since you make a point of it, and for my own, I will be as philosophically careful as possible that these fine nerves of mine shall not be beyond measure agitated, when you arrive. In truth, there is much greater probability that they will be benefited, and greatly too. Joy of heart, from whatever occasion it may arise, is the best of all nervous medicines, and I should not wonder if such a turn given to my spirits, should have even a lasting effect, of the most advantageous kind, upon them. You must not imagine neither, that I am on the whole in any great degree subject to nervous affections; occasionally I am, and have been these many years much liable to dejection. But at intervals, and sometimes for an interval of weeks, no creature would suspect it. For I have not that which commonly is a symptom of such a case belonging to me: I mean extraordinary elevation in the absence of Mr. Blue-devil. When I am in the best health, my tide of animal sprightliness flows with great equality, so that I am never, at any time, exalted in proportion as I am sometimes depressed. My depression has a cause, and if that cause were to cease, I should be as cheerful thenceforth, and perhaps for ever, as any man need be. But, as I have often said, Mrs. Unwin shall be my expositor.

Adieu, my beloved cousin. God grant that our friendship, which while we could see each other, never suffered a moment's interruption, and which so long a separation has not in the least abated, may glow in us to our last hour, and be renewed in a better world, there to be perpetuated for ever.

For you must know that I should not love you half so well, if I did not believe, you would be my friend to eternity. There is not room enough for friendship to unfold itself in full bloom, in such a nook of life as this. Therefore I am, and must, and will be, yours for ever.

LETTER LXXXV.

To the same.

Olney, May 29, 1786.

THOU dear, comfortable cousin, whose letters, among all that I receive, have this property peculiarly their own, that I expect them without trembling, and never find any thing in them that does not give me pleasure! for which, therefore, I would take nothing in exchange, that the world could give me, save, and except that, for which I must exchange them soon, (and happy shall I be to do so) your own company. That, indeed, is delayed a little too long; to my impatience, at least, it seems so, who find the spring, backward as it is, too forward, because many of its beauties will have faded before you will have an opportunity to see them. We took our customary walk yesterday in the wildernesss at Weston, and saw, with regret, the laburnums, syringas, and guelder-roses, some of them blown, and others just upon the point of blowing, and could not help observing—all these will be gone before Lady Hesketh comes. Still, however, there will be roses, and jasmine, and honey-suckle, and shady walks, and cool alcoves, and you will partake them with us. But I want you to have a share of every thing that is delightful here, and cannot bear that the advance of the season should steal away a single pleasure before you can come to enjoy it.

Every

Every day I think of you, and almost all day long; I will venture to say, that even *you* were never so expected in your life. I called last week at the Quaker's to see the furniture of your bed, the fame of which had reached me. It is, I assure you, superb, of printed cotton, and the subject classical. Every morning you will open your eyes on Phaeton kneeling to Apollo, and imploring his father to grant him the conduct of his chariot for a day. May your sleep be as sound, as your bed will be sumptuous, and your nights, at least, will be well provided for.

I shall send up the sixth and seventh books of the Iliad shortly, and shall address them to you. You will forward them to the General. I long to shew you my workshop, and to see you sitting on the opposite side of my table. We shall be as close packed as two wax figures in an old fashioned picture frame. I am writing in it now. It is the place in which I fabricate all my verse in summer time. I rose an hour sooner than usual, this morning, that I might finish my sheet before breakfast, for I must write this day to the General.

The grass, under my windows, is all bespangled with dew-drops, and the birds are singing in the apple-trees, among the blossoms. Never poet had a more commodious oratory, in which, to invoke his Muse.

I have made your heart ache too often, my poor dear cousin, with talking about my fits of dejection. Something has happened that has led me to the subject, or I would have mentioned them more sparingly. Do not suppose, or suspect, that I treat you with reserve; there is nothing, in which I am concerned, that you shall not be made acquainted with. But the tale is too long for a letter. I will only add, for your present satisfaction, that the cause is not exterior, that it is not within the reach of human aid, and that yet I have a hope myself, and Mrs. Unwin a strong persuasion of its removal. I am indeed even now, and have been for a considerable time, sensible of a change for the better, and expect, with good reason, a comfortable lift from you. Guess then, my beloved cousin, with what wishes I look forward to the time of your arrival, from whose coming I promise myself, not only pleasure, but peace of mind, at least an additional share of it. At present it is an uncertain and transient guest with me, but the joy with which I shall see, and converse with, you at Olney, may, perhaps, make it an abiding one.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To the Rev. William Unwin.

My dear Friend,

I WRITE under the impression of a difficulty not easily surmounted, the want of something to say. Letter spinning is generally more entertaining to the writer, than the reader; for your sake therefore, I would avoid it, but a dearth of materials is very apt to betray one into a trifling strain, in spite of all our endeavours to be serious.

I left off on Saturday, this present being Monday morning, I renewed the attempt, in hopes that I may possibly catch some subject by the end, and be more successful.

> So have I seen the maids in vain
> Tumble and tease a tangled skein:
> They bite the lip, and scratch the head,
> And cry——"the deuce is in the thread!"
> They torture it, and jerk it round,
> 'Till the right end at last is found,
> Then wind, and wind, and wind away,
> And what was work is chang'd to play.

When I wrote the first two lines, I thought I had engaged in a hazardous enterprise: for, thought I, should my poetical vein be as dry as my prosaic, I shall spoil the sheet, and send nothing at all: for I could on no account endure the thought of beginning again. But I think I have succeeded to admiration, and am willing to flatter myself, that I have even seen a worse impromptu in the news-papers.

Though we live in a nook, and the world is quite unconscious that there are any such beings in it as ourselves, yet we are not unconcerned about what passes in it. The present awful crisis, big with the fate of England, engages much of our attention. The action is probably over by this time, and though we know it not, the grand question is decided, whether the war shall roar in our once peaceful fields, or whether we shall

shall still only hear of it at a distance. I can compare the nation to no similitude more apt, than that of an antient castle, that had been for days assaulted by the battering ram. It was long before the stroke of that engine made any sensible impression, but the continual repetition at length communicated a slight tremor to the wall, the next, and the next, and the next blow encreased it. Another shock puts the whole mass in motion, from the top to the foundation; it bends forward, and is every moment driven farther from the perpendicular; till at last the decisive blow is given, and down it comes. Every million that has been raised within the last century, has had an effect upon the constitution, like that of a blow from the aforesaid ram, upon the aforesaid wall. The impulse becomes more and more important, and the impression it makes is continually augmented; unless therefore something extraordinary intervenes to prevent it——you will find the consequence at the end of my simile. Yours.

LETTER LXXXVII.

To the same.

My dear William,

How apt we are to deceive ourselves where self is in question: you say I am in your debt, and I accounted you in mine: a mistake to which you must attribute my arrears, if indeed I owe you any, for I am not backward to write where the uppermost thought is welcome.

I am obliged to you for all the books you have occasionally furnished me with: I did not indeed read many of Johnson's Classics—those of established reputation are so fresh in my memory, though many years have intervened since I made them my companions, that it was like reading what I read yesterday over again; and as to the minor Classics, I did not think them worth reading at all—I tasted most of them, and did not like them—it is a great thing to be indeed a poet, and does not happen to more than one man in a century. Churchill, the great Churchill, deserved the name of poet—I have read him twice, and some of his pieces three times over, and the last time with more pleasure than the first. The pitiful scribbler of his life, seems to have undertaken that task, for which he was entirely unqualified, merely because it afforded him an opportunity to traduce him. He has inserted in it but one anecdote of consequence, for which he refers you to a novel, and introduces the story, with doubts about the truth of it. But his barrenness as a biographer I could forgive, if the simpleton had not thought himself a judge of his writings, and under the erroneous influence of that thought, informs his reader that Gotham, Independence, and the Times, were catchpennies. Gotham, unless I am a greater blockhead than he, which I am far from believing, is a noble and beautiful poem, and a poem with which I make no doubt the author took as much pains, as with any he ever wrote. Making allowance (and Dryden perhaps, in his Absalom and Architophel, stands in need of the same indulgence) for an unwarrantable use of scripture, it appears to me to be a masterly performance. Independence is a most animated piece, full of strength and spirit, and marked with that bold masculine character, which I think is the great peculiarity of this writer. And the Times (except that the subject is disgusting to the last degree), stands equally high in my opinion. He is indeed a careless writer for the most part, but where shall we find in any of those authors, who finish their works with the exactness of a Flemish pencil, those bold and daring strokes of fancy, those numbers so hazardously ventured upon, and so happily finished, the matter so compressed, and yet so clear, and the colouring so sparingly laid on, and yet with such a beautiful effect? In short, it is not his least praise that he is never guilty of those faults as a writer, which he lays to the charge of others. A proof that he did not judge by a borrowed standard, or from rules laid down by critics, but that he was qualified to do it by his own native powers, and his great superiority of genius. For he that wrote so much, and so fast, would through inadvertence and hurry, unavoidably have departed from rules which he might have found in books, but his own

own truly poetical talent was a guide which could not suffer him to err. A race-horse is graceful in his swiftest pace, and never makes an awkward motion though he is pushed to his utmost speed. A cart-horse might perhaps be taught to play tricks in the riding-school, and might prance and curvet like his betters, but at some unlucky time would be sure to betray the baseness of his original. It is an affair of very little consequence perhaps to the well-being of mankind, but I cannot help regretting that he died so soon. Those words of Virgil, upon the immature death of Marcellus, might serve for his epitaph.

" Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque
" ultra
" Esse sinent——."

Yours.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To the same.

My dear Friend,

I FIND the Register in all respects an entertaining medley, but especially in this, that it has brought to my view some long forgotten pieces of my own production. I mean, by the way, two or three. Those I have marked with my own initials, and you may be sure I found them peculiarly agreeable, as they had not only the grace of being mine, but that of novelty likewise to recommend them. It is at least twenty years since I saw them. You, I think, was never a dabbler in rhyme. I have been one ever since I was fourteen years of age, when I began with translating an elegy of Tibullus. I have no more right to the name of a poet, than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer, but my little exploits in this way have at times amused me so much, that I have often wished myself a good one. Such a talent in verse as mine, is like a child's rattle, very entertaining to the trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. But it has served to rid me of some melancholy moments, for I only take it up as a gentleman-performer does his fiddle. I have this peculiarity belonging to me as a rhymist, that though I am charmed to a great degree with my own work, while it is on the anvil, I can seldom bear to look at it when it is once finished. The more I contemplate it, the more it loses its value, till I am at last disgusted with it. I then throw it by, take it up again, perhaps ten years after, and am as much delighted with it as at the first.

Few people have the art of being agreeable when they talk of themselves, if you are not weary therefore, you pay me a high compliment.

I dare say Miss S—— was much diverted with the conjecture of her friends. The true key to the pleasure she found at Olney, was plain enough to be seen, but they chose to overlook it. She brought with her a disposition to be pleased, which whoever does, is sure to find a visit agreeable, because they make it so. Yours.

LETTER LXXXIX.

To Lady Hesketh.

Weston-Lodge, Nov. 26, 1786.

IT is my birth-day, my beloved cousin, and I determine to employ a part of it, that it may not be destitute of festivity, in writing to you. The dark, thick fog that has obscured it, would have been a burthen to me at Olney, but here I have hardly attended to it. The neatness and snugness of our abode, compensates all the dreariness of the season, and whether the ways are wet or dry, our house at least is always warm and commodious. Oh! for you, my cousin, to partake these comforts with us; I will not begin already to tease you upon that subject, but Mrs. Unwin remembers to have heard from your own lips, that you hate London in the spring. Perhaps, therefore, by that time, you may be glad to escape from a scene which will be every day growing more disagreeable, that you may enjoy the comforts of the lodge. You well know that the best house has a desolate appearance unfurnished. This house accordingly, since it has been occupied by us, and our *meubles*, is as much superior to what it was when you saw it, as you can imagine. The parlour is even elegant. When I say that the parlour

lour is elegant, I do not mean to insinuate that the study is not so. It is neat, warm, and silent, and a much better study than I deserve, if I do not produce in it, an incomparable translation of Homer. I think every day of those lines of Milton, and congratulate myself on having obtained, before I am quite superannuated, what he seems not to have hoped for sooner.

"And may at length my weary age,
"Find out the peaceful hermitage!"

For if it is not a hermitage, at least it is a much better thing, and you must always understand, my dear, that when poets talk of cottages, hermitages, and such like things, they mean a house with six sashes in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart stair-case, and three bed chambers, of convenient dimensions; in short, exactly such a house as this.

The Throckmortons continue the most obliging neighbours in the world. One morning last week, they both went with me to the cliffs—a scene, my dear, in which you would delight beyond measure, but which you cannot visit except in the spring or autumn. The heat of summer, and clinging dirt of winter, would destroy you. What is called the cliff, is no cliff, nor at all like one, but a beautiful terrace, sloping gently down to the Ouse, and from the brow of which, though not lofty, you have a view of such a valley, as makes that which you see from the hills near Olney, and which I have had the honour to celebrate, an affair of no consideration.

Wintry as the weather is, do not suspect that it confines me. I ramble daily, and every day change my ramble. Wherever I go, I find short grass under my feet, and when I have travelled perhaps five miles, come home with shoes not at all too dirty for a drawing-room. I was pacing yesterday under the elms, that surround the field in which stands the great alcove, when lifting my eyes I saw two black genteel figures bolt through a hedge, into the path where I was walking. You guess already who they were, and that they could be nobody but our neighbours. They had seen me from a hill at a distance, and had traversed a great turnip field to get at me. You see, therefore, my dear, that I am in some request. Alas! in too much request with some people. The verses of Cadwallader have found me at last.

I am charmed with your account of our little cousin* at Kensington. If the world does not spoil him hereafter, he will be a valuable man. Good night, and may God bless thee.

LETTER XC.

To the same.

The Lodge, Dec. 1, 1786.

I SENT you, my dear, a melancholy letter, and I do not know that I shall now send you one very unlike it. Not that any thing occurs in consequence of our late loss more afflictive than was to be expected, but the mind does not perfectly recover its tone after a shock like that which has been felt so lately. This I observe, that though my experience has long since taught me, that this world is a world of shadows, and that it is the more prudent, as well as the more Christian course, to possess the comforts that we find in it, as if we possessed them not, it is no easy matter to reduce this doctrine into practice. We forget that that God who gave them, may, when he pleases, take them away; and that perhaps it may please him to take them at a time when we least expect, or are least disposed to part from them. Thus it has happened in the present case. There never was a moment in Unwin's life when there seemed to be more urgent want of him than the moment in which he died. He had attained to an age, when, if they are at any time useful, men become more useful to their families, their friends, and the world. His parish began to feel, and to be sensible of the advantages of his ministry. The clergy around him were many of them awed by his example. His children were thriving under his own tuition and management, and his eldest boy is likely to feel his loss severely, being by his years, in some respect, qualified to understand the value of such a parent; by his literary

* Lord Cowper.

proficiency too clever for a school-boy, and too young at the same time for the university. The removal of a man in the prime of life, of such a character, and with such connexions, seems to make a void in society that can never be filled. God seemed to have made him just what he was, that he might be a blessing to others, and when the influence of his character and abilities began to be felt, removed him. These are mysteries, my dear, that we cannot contemplate without astonishment, but which will nevertheless be explained hereafter, and must in the mean time be revered in silence. It is well for his mother that she has spent her life in the practice of an habitual acquiescence in the dispensations of Providence, else I know that this stroke would have been heavier, after all that she has suffered upon another account, than she could have borne. She derives, as she well may, great consolation from the thought that he lived the life, and died the death, of a Christian. The consequence is, if possible, more unavoidable than the most mathematical conclusion, that therefore he is happy. So farewell, my friend Unwin! The first man for whom I conceived a friendship after my removal from St. Alban's, and for whom I cannot but still continue to feel a friendship, though I shall see thee with these eyes no more!

LETTER XCI.

To Samuel Rose, Esq.

Dear Sir, Weston, Oct. 19, 1787.

A SUMMONS from Johnson, which I received yesterday, calls my attention once more to the business of translation. Before I begin I am willing to catch, though but a short opportunity, to acknowledge your last favour. The necessity of applying myself with all diligence to a long work that has been but too long interrupted, will make my opportunities of writing rare in future.

Air and exercise are necessary to all men, but particularly so to the man, whose mind labours, and to him who has been all his life accustomed to much of both, they are necessary in the extreme. My time, since we parted, has been devoted entirely to the recovery of health and strength for this service, and I am willing to hope with good effect. Ten months have passed since I discontinued my poetical efforts; I do not expect to find the same readiness as before, till exercise of the neglected faculty, such as it is, shall have restored it to me.

You find yourself, I hope, by this time as comfortably situated in your new abode, as in a new abode one can be. I enter perfectly into all your feelings on occasion of the change. A sensible mind cannot do violence even to a local attachment without much pain. When my father died, I was young, too young, to have reflected much. He was rector of Berkhamstead, and there I was born. It had never occurred to me that a parson has no fee-simple in the house and glebe he occupies. There was neither tree, nor gate, nor stile, in all that country, to which I did not feel a relation, and the house itself I preferred to a palace. I was sent for from London to attend him in his last illness, and he died just before I arrived. Then, and not till then, I felt for the first time that I and my native place were disunited for ever. I sighed a long adieu to fields and woods, from which I once thought I should never be parted, and was at no time so sensible of their beauties, as just when I left them all behind me, to return no more.

LETTER XCII.

To Lady Hesketh.

The Lodge, Nov. 10, 1787.

THE parliament, my dearest Cousin, prorogued continually, is a meteor dancing before my eyes, promising me my wish only to disappoint me, and none but the king and his ministers can tell when you and I shall come together. I hope however that the period, though so often postponed, is not far distant, and that once more I shall behold you, and experience your power to make winter gay and sprightly.

I have a kitten, the drollest of all creatures, that ever wore a cat's skin. Her gambols are not to be described, and would be incredible, if they could.

In

In point of size she is likely to be a kitten always, being extremely small of her age, but time, I suppose, that spoils every thing, will make her also a cat. You will see her, I hope, before that melancholy period shall arrive, for no wisdom that she may gain by experience and reflection hereafter, will compensate the loss of her present hilarity. She is dressed in a tortoise-shell suit, and I know that you will delight in her.

Mrs. Throckmorton carries us to-morrow in her chaise to Chicheley. The event however must be supposed to depend on elements, at least on the state of the atmosphere, which is turbulent beyond measure. Yesterday it thundered, last night it lightened, and at three this morning I saw the sky as red as a city in flames could have made it. I have a leech in a bottle that foretells all these prodigies and convulsions of nature. No, not, as you will naturally conjecture, by articulate utterance of oracular notices, but by a variety of gesticulations, which here I have not room to give an account of. Suffice it to say, that no change of weather surprises him, and that in point of the earliest and most accurate intelligence, he is worth all the barometers in the world. None of them all indeed can make the least pretence to foretell thunder ——a species of capacity of which he has given the most unequivocal evidence. I gave but six-pence for him, which is a groat more than the market price, though he is in fact, or rather would be, if leeches were not found in every ditch, an invaluable acquisition.

LETTER XCIII.

To the same.

The Lodge, Nov. 27, 1778.

It is the part of wisdom, my dearest Cousin, to sit down contented under the demands of necessity, because they are such. I am sensible that you cannot, in my uncle's present infirm state, and of which it is not possible to expect any considerable amendment, indulge either us, or yourself, with a journey to Weston. Yourself, I say, both because I know it will give you pleasure to see *Causidice mi** once more, especially in the comfortable abode where you have placed him, and because after so long an imprisonment in London, you, who love the country, and have a taste for it, would of course be glad to return to it. For my own part, to me it is ever new, and though I have now been an inhabitant of this village a twelvemonth, and have during the half of that time been at liberty to expatiate, and to make discoveries, I am daily finding out fresh scenes and walks, which you would never be satisfied with enjoying—some of them are unapproachable by you either on foot or in your carriage. Had you twenty toes (whereas I suppose you have but ten) you could not reach them; and coach wheels have never been seen there since the flood. Before it indeed, (as Burnet says, that the earth was then perfectly free from all inequalities in its surface) they might have been seen there every day. We have other walks both upon hill tops, and in vallies beneath, some of which by the help of your carriage, and many of them without its help, would be always at your command.

On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and being desired to sit, spoke as follows: "Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All-"Saints in Northampton; brother of "Mr. C. the upholsterer. It is custo-"mary for the person in my office to an-"nex to a bill of mortality which he "publishes at Christmas, a copy of "verses. You will do me a great fa-"vour, Sir, if you would furnish me "with one." To this I replied, "Mr. "C. you have several men of genius in "your town, why have you not applied "to some of them? There is a name-"sake of yours in particular, C——, "the statuary, who, every body knows, "is a first-rate maker of verses. He "surely is the man of all the world for "your purpose."—"Alas! Sir, I have "heretofore borrowed help from him,

* The appellation which Sir Thomas Hesketh used to give him in jest when he was of the Temple.

"but he is a gentleman of so much read-"ing, that the people of our town can-"not understand him." I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, perhaps, my good friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason. But on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him. The waggon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary stile. A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals! I have written *one*, that serves *two hundred* persons.

A few days since I received a second very obliging letter from Mr. M— —. He tells me that his own papers, which are by far, he is sorry to say, the most numerous, are marked V. I. Z. Accordingly, my dear, I am happy to find that I am engaged in a correspondence with Mr. Viz, a gentleman for whom I have always entertained the profoundest veneration. But the serious fact is, that the papers distinguished by those signatures, have ever pleased me most, and struck me as the work of a sensible man, who knows the world well, and has more of Addison's delicate humour than any body.

A poor man begged food at the Hall lately. The cook gave him some vermicelli soup. He ladled it about some time with the spoon, and then returned it to her saying, "I am a poor man it "is true, and I am very hungry, but "yet I cannot eat broth with maggots in "it." Once more, my dear, a thousand thanks for your box full of good things, useful things, and beautiful things,

Yours ever.

LETTER XCIV.

To the same.

The Lodge, Jan. 19, 1788.

When I have prose enough to fill my paper, which is always the case when I write to you, I cannot find in my heart to give a third part of it to verse. Yet this I must do, or I must make my pacquets more costly than worshipful, by doubling the postage upon you, which I should hold to be unreasonable. See then the true reason why I did not send you that same scribblement till you desired it. The thought which naturally presents itself to me on all such occasions is this—Is not your cousin coming? Why are you impatient? Will it not be time enough to shew her your fine things when she arrives?

Fine things indeed I have few. He who has Homer to transcribe may well be contented to do little else. As when an ass being harnessed with ropes to a sand cart, drags with hanging ears his heavy burthen, neither filling the long echoing streets with his harmonious bray, nor throwing up his heels behind, frolicksome and airy, as asses less engaged are wont to do; so I, satisfied to find myself indispensibly obliged to render into the best possible English metre, eight and forty Greek books, of which the two finest poems in the world consist, account it quite sufficient if I may at last achieve that labour, and seldom allow myself those pretty little vagaries in which I should otherwise delight, and of which if I should live long enough, I intend hereafter to enjoy my fill.

This is the reason, my dear Cousin, if I may be permitted to call you so in the same breath with which I have uttered this truly heroic comparison; this is the reason why I produce at present but few occasional poems, and the preceding reason is that, which may account satisfactorily enough for my withholding the very few that I do produce. A thought sometimes strike me before I rise; if it runs readily into verse, and I can finish it before breakfast, it is well; otherwise it dies, and is forgotten; for all the subsequent hours are devoted to Homer.

The day before yesterday, I saw for the first time, Bunbury's new print, the Propagation of a Lie. Mr. Throckmorton sent it for the amusement of our party. Bunbury sells humour by the yard, and is I suppose the first vender of it who ever did so. He cannot therefore be said to have humour without measure (pardon a pun, my dear, from a man who has not made one before

these

these forty years) though he may certainly be said to be immeasurably droll.

The original thought is good, and the exemplification of it in those very expressive figures, admirable. A poem on the same subject, displaying all that is displayed in those attitudes, and in those features, (for faces they can hardly be called) would be most excellent. The affinity of the two arts, viz. verse and painting, has been often observed; possibly the happiest illustration of it would be found, if some poet would ally himself to some draftsman, as Bunbury, and undertake to write every thing he should draw. Then let a musician be admitted of the party. He should compose the said poem, adapting notes to it exactly accommodated to the theme; so should the sister arts be proved to be indeed sisters, and the world die of laughing.

LETTER XCV.

To the same.

The Lodge, Jan. 30, 1788.

My dearest Cousin,

It is a fortnight since I heard from you, that is to say, a week longer than you have accustomed me to wait for a letter. I do not forget that you have recommended it to me, on occasions somewhat similar, to banish all anxiety, and to ascribe your silence only to the interruptions of company. Good advice, my dear, but not easily taken by a man circumstanced as I am. I have learned in the school of adversity, a school from which I have no expectation that I shall ever be dismissed, to apprehend the worst, and have ever found it the only course in which I can indulge myself without the least danger of incurring a disappointment. This kind of experience, continued through many years, has given me such an habitual bias to the gloomy side of every thing, that I never have a moment's ease on any subject to which I am not indifferent. How then can I be easy when I am left afloat upon a sea of endless conjectures, of which you furnish the occasion. Write, I beseech you, and do not forget that I am now a battered actor upon this turbulent stage. That what little vigour of mind I ever had, of the self-supporting kind I mean, has long since been broken, and that though I can bear nothing well, yet any thing better than a state of ignorance concerning your welfare. I have spent hours in the night leaning upon my elbow and wondering what your silence means. I intreat you once more to put an end to these speculations, which cost me more animal spirits than I can spare; if you cannot without great trouble to yourself, (which in your situation may very possibly be the case), contrive opportunities of writing so frequently as usual, only say it, and I am content. I will wait, if you desire it, as long for every letter, but then let them arrive at the period once fixed, exactly at the time, for my patience will not hold out an hour beyond it.

LETTER XCVI.

To the same.

The Lodge, Feb. 1, 1788.

Pardon me, my dearest Cousin, the mournful ditty that I sent you last. There are times when I see every thing through a medium that distresses me, to an insupportable degree, and that letter was written in one of them. A fog that had for three days obliterated all the beauties of Weston, and a north-east wind, might possibly contribute not a little to the melancholy that indited it. But my mind is now easy, your letter has made it so, and I feel myself as blithe as a bird in comparison. I love you, my Cousin, and cannot suspect, either with or without cause, the least evil in which you may be concerned, without being greatly troubled! Oh Trouble! The portion of all mortals—but mine in particular. Would I had never known thee, or could bid thee farewell for ever; for I meet thee at every turn, my pillows are stuffed with thee, my very roses smell of thee, and even my Cousin, who would cure me of all trouble if she could, is sometimes innocently the cause of trouble to me.

I now see the unreasonableness of my late trouble, and would, if I could trust myself so far, promise never again to trouble either myself or you in the same manner, unless warranted by some more substantial ground of apprehension.

What I said concerning Homer, my

dear, was spoken, or rather written, merely under the influence of a certain jocularity that I felt at that moment. I am in reality so far from thinking myself an ass, and my translation a sand-cart, that I rather seem, in my own account of the matter, one of those flaming steeds harnessed to the chariot of Apollo, of which we read in the works of the antients. I have lately, I know not how, acquired a certain superiority to myself in this business, and in this last revisal have elevated the expression to a degree far surpassing its former boast. A few evenings since I had an opportunity to try how far I might venture to expect such success of my labours as can alone repay them, by reading the first book of my Iliad to a friend of ours. He dined with you once at Olney. His name is Greatheed, a man of letters and of taste. He dined with us, and the evening proving dark and dirty, we persuaded him to take a bed. I entertained him as I tell you. He heard me with great attention, and with evident symptoms of the highest satisfaction, which when I had finished the exhibition, he put out of all doubt by expressions which I cannot repeat. Only this he said to Mrs. Unwin while I was in another room, that he had never entered into the spirit of Homer before, nor had any thing like a due conception of his manner. This I have said, knowing that it will please you, and will now say no more.

Adieu! my dear: will you never speak of coming to Weston more?

LETTER XCVII.

Dr. Beattie to Robert Arbuthnot, Esq.

Aberdeen, 12th December, 1768.

SINCE you left us, I have been reading Tasso's "Jerusalem," in the translation lately published by Hoole. I was not a little anxious to peruse a poem which is so famous over all Europe, and has so often been mentioned as a rival to the "Iliad," "Æneid," and "Paradise Lost." It is certainly a noble work; and though it seems to me to be inferior to the three poems just mentioned, yet I cannot help thinking it in the rank next to these. As for the other modern attempts at the "Epopee," the "Henriade" of Voltaire, the "Epigoniad" of Wilkie, the "Leonidas" of Glover, not to mention the "Arthur" of Blackmore, they are not to be compared with it. Tasso possesses an exuberant and sublime imagination, though in exuberance it seems, in my opinion, inferior to our Spenser, and in sublimity inferior to Milton. Were I to compare Milton's genius with Tasso's, I would say, that the sublime of the latter is flashy and fluctuating, while that of the former diffuses an uniform, steady, and vigorous blaze: Milton is more majestic, Tasso more dazzling. Dryden, it seems, was of opinion, that the "Jerusalem Delivered" was the only poem of modern times that deserved the name of epic; but it is certain that criticism was not this writer's talent; and I think it is evident, from some passages of his works, that he either did not, or would not, understand the "Paradise Lost." Tasso borrows his plot and principal characters from Homer, but his manner resembles Virgil's. He is certainly much obliged to Virgil, and scruples not to imitate, nor to translate him on many occasions. In the *pathetic* he is far inferior both to Homer, to Virgil, and to Milton. His characters, though different, are not always distinct, and want those masterly and distinguishing strokes which the genius of Homer and Shakespeare, and of them only, knows how to delineate. Tasso excels in describing pleasurable scenes, and seems peculiarly fond of such as have a reference to the passion of love. Yet, in characterising this passion, he is far inferior, not only to Milton, but also to Virgil, whose *fourth book* he has been at great pains to imitate. The translation is smooth and flowing; but in dignity, and variety of numbers, is often defective, and often labours under a feebleness and prolixity of phrase, evidently proceeding either from want of skill, or from want of leisure in the versifier.

LETTER

LETTER XCVIII.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 30th January, 1766.

Your zeal in promoting my interest demands my warmest acknowledgements; yet, for want of adequate expressions, I scarce know in what manner to pay them. I must therefore leave you to guess at my gratitude, by the emotions which would arise in your own heart, on receiving a very important favour from a person of whom you had merited nothing, and to whom you could make no just return.

I suppose you have seen my letter to Dr. Blacklock. I hope, in due time, to be acquainted with your sentiments concerning it. I know not whether I have gained my point or not: but in composing that letter I was more studious of simplicity of diction than in any other of my pieces. I am not, indeed, in this respect, so very scrupulous as some critics of these times. I see no harm in using an expressive epithet, when, without the use of such an epithet, one cannot do justice to his idea. Even a compounded epithet, provided it be suitable to the genius of our language, and authenticated by some good writer, may often, in my opinion, produce a good effect. My notion of simplicity discards every thing from style which is affected, superfluous, indefinite, or obscure; but admits every grace, which, without encumbering a sentiment, does really embellish and enforce it. I am no friend to those prettinesses of modern style, which one may call the pompous earrings, and flounces of the muses, which, with some writers, are so highly in vogue at present; they may, by their glare and fluttering, take off the eye from imperfections; but I am convinced they disguise and disfigure the charms of genuine beauty.

I have of late been much engaged in metaphysics; at least I have been labouring with all my might to overturn that visionary science. I am a member of a club in this town, who style themselves the Philosophical Society. We have meetings every fortnight, and deliver discourses in our turn. I hope you will not think the worse of this society, when I tell you, that to it the world is indebted for "A comparative View of "the Faculties of Man," and an "Enquiry into Human Nature, on the Principles of Common Sense." Criticism is the field in which I have hitherto (chiefly at least) chosen to expatiate; but an accidental question lately furnished me with an hint, which I made the subject of a two hours discourse at our last meeting. I have for some time wished for an opportunity of publishing something relating to the business of my own profession, and I think I have now found an opportunity; for the doctrine of my last discourse seems to be of importance, and I have already finished two-thirds of my plan. My doctrine is this: that as we know nothing of the eternal relations of things, *that* to us *is* and must be *truth*, which we feel that we must believe; and *that* to us is falsehood, which we feel that we must disbelieve. I have shown that all genuine reasoning does ultimately terminate in certain principles, which it is impossible to disbelieve, and as impossible to prove: that therefore the ultimate standard of truth to us is common sense, or that instinctive conviction into which all true reasoning does resolve itself: that therefore what contradicts common sense is in itself absurd, however subtle the arguments which support it: for such is the ambiguity and insufficiency of language, that it is easy to argue on either side of any question with acuteness sufficient to confound one who is not expert in the art of reasoning. My principles, in the main, are not essentially different from Dr. Reid's; but they seem to offer a more compendious method of destroying scepticism. I intend to show (and have already in part shown), that all sophistical reasoning is marked with certain characters which distinguish it from true investigation: and thus I flatter myself I shall be able to discover a method of detecting sophistry, even when one is not able to give a logical confutation of its arguments. I intend farther to enquire into the nature of that modification of intellect which qualifies a man for being a sceptic; and I think I am able to prove that it is not genius, but the want of it. However, it will be summer before I can finish my project. I own it is not without indignation, that

I see sceptics and their writings (which are the bane not only of science, but also of virtue) so much in vogue in the present age.

LETTER XCIX.

To the same.

Aberdeen, 18th September, 1766.

You flatter me very agreeably, by wishing me to engage in a translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem." If I had all the other accomplishments necessary to fit me for such an undertaking, (which is by no means the case) I have not as yet acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Italian language, although I understand it tolerably well. My proficiency would have been much more considerable, if my health had allowed me to study; but I have been obliged to estrange myself from books for some months past. I intend to persist in my resolution of acquiring that language, for I am wonderfully delighted with the Italian poetry. It does not seem to abound much in those strokes of fancy that raise admiration and astonishment, in which I think the English very much superior; but it possesses all the milder graces in an eminent degree; in simplicity, harmony, delicacy, and tenderness, it is altogether without a rival. I cannot well account for that neglect of the Italian literature, which, for about a century past, has been fashionable among us. I believe Mr. Addison may have been instrumental in introducing, or, at least, in vindicating it; though I am inclined to think, that he took, upon trust, from Boileau, that censure which he past upon the Italian poets, and which has been current among the critics ever since the days of the "Spectator."

A good translation of Tasso would be a very valuable accession to English literature; but it would be a most difficult undertaking, on account of the genius of our language, which, though in the highest degree copious, expressive, and sonorous, is not to be compared with the Italian in delicacy, sweetness, and simplicity of composition; and these are qualities so characteristical of Tasso, that a translator would do the highest injustice to his author, who should fail in transfusing them into his version. Besides, a work of such a nature must not only be laborious, but expensive; so that a prudent person would not choose to engage in it without some hope, not only of being indemnified, but even rewarded; and such a hope it would be madness in me to entertain. Yet, to show that I am not averse from the work (for luckily for poor bards, poetry is sometimes its own reward, and is at any time amply rewarded, when it gratifies the desire of a friend), I design, as soon as I have leisure, and sufficient skill in the language, to try my hand at a short specimen. In the mean time, I flatter myself, you will not think the worse of me for not making a thousand protestations of my insufficiency, and as many acknowledgements of my gratitude, for the honour you do me in supposing me capable of such a work. The truth is, I have so much to say on this subject, that if I were only to begin, I should never have done. Your friendship, and your good opinion, which I shall ever account it my honour to cultivate, I do indeed value more than I can express.

Your neglect of the modern philosophical sceptics, who have too much engaged the attention of these times, does equal honour to your understanding and to your heart. To suppose that every thing may be made matter of dispute, is an exceeding false principle, subversive of all true science, and prejudicial to the happiness of mankind. To confute without convincing is a common case, and indeed a very easy matter: in all conviction (at least in all moral and religious conviction), the heart is engaged, as well as the understanding; and the understanding may be satisfied, or at least confounded, with a doctrine, from which the heart recoils with the strongest aversion. This is not the language of a logician; but this, I hope, is the language of an honest man, who considers all science as frivolous, which does not make men wiser and better; and to puzzle with words, without producing conviction (which is all that our metaphysical sceptics have been able to do), can never promote either the wisdom or the virtue of mankind. It is strange that men should so often forget, that "Happiness is our being's end and "aim." Happiness is desirable for its own

own sake: truth is desirable only as a means of producing happiness: for, who would not prefer an agreeable delusion to a melancholy truth? What then is the use of that philosophy, which aims to inculcate truth at the expence of happiness, by introducing doubt and disbelief in the place of confidence and hope? Surely the promoters of all such philosophy are either the enemies of mankind, or the dupes of their own most egregious folly. I mean not to make any concessions in favour of metaphysical truth: genuine truth and genuine happiness were never inconsistent: but metaphysical truth (such as we find in our sceptical systems) is not genuine, for it is perpetually changing; and no wonder, since it depends not on the common sense of mankind (which is always the same), but varies, according as the talents and inclinations of different authors are different. The doctrines of metaphysical scepticism are either true or false: if false, we have little to do with them; if true, they prove the fallacy of the human faculties, and therefore prove too much; for it follows, as an undeniable consequence, that all human doctrines whatsoever (themselves not excepted) are fallacious, and consequently, pernicious, insignificant, and vain.

LETTER C.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 24th September, 1766.

I AM not a little flattered by your friendly and spirited vindication of the poem on *Bufo*. Among the invidious and malicious I have got a few enemies on account of that performance; among the candid and generous, not one. This, joined to the approbation of my own conscience, is entirely sufficient to make me easy on that head. I have not yet heard whether my little work has been approved or condemned in England. I have not even heard whether it has been published or not. However, the days of romantic hope are now happily over with me, as well as the desire of public applause; a desire of which I never had any title to expect the gratification, and which, though I had been able to gratify it, would not have contributed a single mite to my happiness. Yet I am thankful to Providence for having endued me with an inclination to poetry; for, though I have never been supremely blest in my own muse, I have certainly been gratified, in the most exquisite degree, by the productions of others.

Those pieces of mine from which I have received the highest entertainment, are such as are altogether improper for publication, being written in a sort of burlesque humour, for the amusement of some particular friend, or for some select company; of these I have a pretty large collection; and, though I should be ashamed to be publicly known as the author of many of them, I cannot help entertaining a certain partiality towards them, arising, perhaps, from this circumstance in their favour, that the pleasure they have yielded me has been altogether sincere, unmixed with that chagrin which never fails to attend an unfortunate publication.

Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for if I mistake not, the manner which I have adopted, admits equally of all these kinds of composition. I have written one hundred and fifty lines, and am surprised to find the structure of that complicated stanza so little troublesome. I was always fond of it, for I think it the most harmonious that ever was contrived. It admits of more variety of pauses than either the couplet or the alternate rhyme; and it concludes with a pomp and majesty of sound, which, to my ear, is wonderfully delightful. It seems also very well adapted to the genius of our language, which, from its irregularity of inflexion and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rhymes. But I am so far from intending this performance for the press, that I am morally certain it never will be finished. I shall add a stanza now and then, when I am at leisure, and when I have no humour for any other amusement: but I am resolved to write no more

poetry

poetry with a view to publication, till I see some dawnings of a poetical taste among the generality of readers, of which, however, there is not at present any thing like an appearance.

My employment, and indeed my inclination, leads me rather to prose composition; and in this way I have much to do. The doctrines commonly comprehended under the name of moral philosophy are at present over-run with metaphysics, a luxuriant and tenacious weed, which seldom fails to choak and extirpate the wholesome plants, which it was perhaps intended to support and shelter. To this literary weed I have an insuperable aversion, which becomes stronger and stronger, in proportion as I grow more and more acquainted with its nature, and qualities, and fruits. It is very agreeable to the paradoxical and licentious spirit of the age; but I am thoroughly convinced that it is fatal to true science, an enemy to the fine arts, destructive of genuine sentiment, and prejudicial to the virtue and happiness of mankind.

LETTER CI.

Dr. Beattie to the Hon. Charles Boyd.

Aberdeen, 16th November, 1766.

Of all the chagrins with which my present infirm state of health is attended, none afflicts me more than my inability to perform the duties of friendship. The offer which you were generously pleased to make me of your correspondence, flatters me extremely; but, alas! I have not as yet been able to avail myself of it. While the good weather continued, I strolled about the country, and made many strenuous attempts to run away from this odious giddiness; but the more I struggled, the more closely it seemed to stick by me. About a fortnight ago the hurry of my winter business began; and at the same time my malady recurred with more violence than ever, rendering me at once incapable of reading, writing, and thinking. Luckily I am now a little better, so as to be able to read a page, and write a sentence or two, without stopping; which, I assure you, is a very great matter. My hopes and my spirits begin to revive once more. I flatter myself I shall soon get rid of this infirmity; nay, that I shall even be in the way of becoming a *great man*. For have I not head-ache, like Pope? vertigo, like Swift? grey hairs, like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes (for fear of corns) like Virgil? and sometimes complain of sore eyes, (though not of *lippitude*) like Horace? Am I not at this present writing invested with a garment not less ragged than that of Socrates? Like Joseph the patriarch, I am a mighty dreamer of dreams; like Nimrod the hunter, I am an eminent builder of castles (in the air). I procrastinate, like Julius Cæsar; and very lately, in imitation of Don Quixotte, I rode a horse, lean, old, and lazy, like Rosinante. Sometimes, like Cicero, I write bad verses; and sometimes bad prose, like Virgil. This last instance I have on the authority of Seneca. I am of small stature, like Alexander the Great; I am somewhat inclinable to fatness, like Dr. Arbuthnot and Aristotle; and I drink brandy and water, like Mr. Boyd. I might compare myself, in relation to many other infirmities, to many other *great men;* but if fortune is not influenced in my favour by the particulars already enumerated, I shall despair of ever recommending myself to her good graces. I once had some thought of soliciting her patronage on the score of my resembling great men in their good qualities; but I had so little to say on that subject, that I could not for my life furnish matter for one well-rounded period: and you know a short ill-turned speech is very improper to be used in an address to a female deity.

Do not you think there is a sort of antipathy between philosophical and poetical genius? I question, whether any one person was ever eminent for both. Lucretius lays aside the poet when he assumes the philosopher, and the philosopher when he assumes the poet: In the one character he is truly excellent, in the other he is absolutely nonsensical. Hobbes was a tolerable metaphysician, but his poetry is the worst that ever was. Pope's "Essay on Man" is the finest philosophical poem in the world; but it seems to me to do more honour to the imagination than to the understanding of its author: I mean, its sentiments are noble

noble and affecting, its images and allusions apposite, beautiful, and new: its wit transcendently excellent; but the scientific part of it is very exceptionable. What ever Pope borrows from Leibnitz, like most other metaphysical theories, is frivolous and unsatisfying: what Pope gives us of his own is energetic, irresistible, and divine. The incompatibility of philosophical and poetical genius is, I think, no unaccountable thing. Poetry exhibits the general qualities of a species; philosophy the particular qualities of individuals. *This* forms its conclusions from a painful and minute examination of single instances: *that* decides instantaneously, either from its own instinctive sagacity, or from a singular and unaccountable penetration, which at one glance sees all the instances which the philosopher must leisurely and progressively scrutinize, one by one. This persuades you gradually, and by detail; the other overpowers you in an instant by a single effort. Observe the effect of argumentation in poetry; we have too many instances of it in Milton: it transforms the noblest thoughts into drawling inferences, and the most beautiful language into prose: it checks the tide of passion, by giving the mind a different employment in the comparison of ideas. A little philosophical acquaintance with the most beautiful parts of nature, both in the material and immaterial system, is of use to a poet, and gives grace and solidity to poetry; as may be seen in the "Georgics," "the Seasons," and "the Pleasures of Imagination;" but this acquaintance, if it is any thing more than superficial, will do a poet rather harm than good: and will give his mind that turn for minute observation, which enfeebles the fancy by restraining it, and counteracts the native energy of judgment by rendering it fearful and suspicious.

LETTER CII.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 17th January, 1768.

I HAVE been intending, for these several weeks, to write to you, though it were only to assure you of the continuance of my esteem and attachment. This place, you know, furnishes little amusement, either political or literary; and at this season it is rather more barren than usual.

I have, for a time, laid aside my favourite studies, that I might have leisure to prosecute a philosophical inquiry, less amusing indeed than poetry and criticism, but not less important. The extraordinary success of the sceptical philosophy has long filled me with regret. I wish I could undeceive mankind in regard to this matter; perhaps this wish is vain; but it can do no harm to make the trial. The point I am now labouring to prove, is the universality and immutability of moral sentiment, a point which has been brought into dispute, both by the friends and by the enemies of virtue. In an age less licentious in its principles, it would not, perhaps, be necessary to insist much on this point. At present it is very necessary. Philosophers have ascribed all religion to human policy. Nobody knows how soon they may ascribe all morality to the same origin; and then the foundations of human society, as well as of human happiness, will be effectually undermined. To accomplish this end, Hobbes, Hume, Mandeville, and even Locke, have laboured; and I am sorry to say, from my knowledge of mankind, that their labour has not been altogether in vain. Not that the works of these philosophers are generally read, or even understood by the few who read them. It is not the mode, now-a-days, for a man to think for himself; but they greedily adopt the conclusions, without any concern about the arguments or principles whence they proceed; and they justify their own credulity by general declamations upon the transcendant merit of their favourite authors, and the universal deference that is paid to their genius and learning. If I can prove those authors guilty of gross misrepresentations of matters of fact, unacquainted with the human heart, ignorant even of their own principles, the dupes of verbal ambiguities, and the votaries of frivolous, though dangerous philosophy, I shall do some little service to the cause of truth; and all this I will undertake to prove in many instances of high importance.

You

You have no doubt seen Dr. Blacklock's new book*. I was very much surprised to see my name prefixed to the dedication, as he never had given me the least intimation of such a design. His friendship does me great honour. I should be sorry, if, in this instance, it has got the better of his prudence; and I have some reason to fear, that my name will be no recommendation to the work, at least in this place, where, however, the book is very well spoken of, by some who have read it. I should like to know how it takes at Edinburgh.

LETTER CIII.

The same to the same.

Aberdeen, 4th May, 1770.

NOTHING, I think, is stirring in the literary world. All ranks are run mad with politics; and I know not whether there was any period at which it was more unseasonable to publish new books. I do not mean, that the nation has no need of instruction; I mean only, that it has neither leisure nor inclination to listen to any.

I am a very great admirer of Armstrong's poem on "Health;" and therefore as soon as I heard that the same author had published two volumes of "Miscellanies," I sent a commission for them with great expectations: but I am miserably disappointed. I know not what is the matter with Armstrong; but he seems to have conceived a rooted aversion at the whole human race, except a few friends, who, it seems, are dead. He sets the public opinion at defiance; a piece of boldness, which neither Virgil nor Horace were ever so shameless as to acknowledge. It is very true, that living authors are often hardly dealt with by their contemporaries; witness Milton, Collins the poet, and many others: but I believe it is equally true, that no good piece was ever published, which did not sooner or later obtain the public approbation. How is it possible it should be otherwise! People read for amusement. If a book be capable of yielding amusement, it will naturally be read; for no man is an enemy to what gives him pleasure. Some books, indeed, being calculated for the intellects of a few, can please only a few; yet if they produce this effect, they answer all the end the authors intended; and if those few be men of any note, which is generally the case, the herd of mankind will very willingly fall in with their judgment, and consent to admire what they do not understand. I question whether there are now in Europe two thousand, or even one thousand, persons, who understand a word of Newton's "Principia;" yet there are in Europe many millions who extol Newton as a very great philosopher. Those are but a small number who have any sense of the beauties of Milton; yet every body admires Milton, because it is the fashion. Of all the English poets of this age, Mr. Gray is most admired, and, I think, with justice; yet there are, comparatively speaking, but a few who know any thing of his, but his "Church-yard Elegy," which is by no means the best of his works. I do not think that Dr. Armstrong has any cause to complain of the public: his "Art of Health" is not indeed a popular poem, but it is very much liked, and has often been printed. It will make him known and esteemed by posterity: and I presume he will be the more esteemed, if all his other works perish with him. In his "Sketches," indeed, are many sensible, and some striking, remarks; but they breathe such a rancorous and contemptuous spirit, and abound so much in odious vulgarisms and colloquial execrations, that in reading we are as often disgusted as pleased. I know not what to say of his "Universal Almanack:" it seems to me an attempt at humour; but such humour is either too high or too low for my comprehension. The plan of his tragedy, called the "Forced Marriage," is both obscure and improbable; yet there are good strokes in it, particularly in the last scene.

As I know your taste and talents in painting, I cannot help communicating to you an observation, which I lately had occasion, not to make, for I had made it before, but to see illustrated in a very striking manner. I was reading the Abbé du Bos' "Reflections on Poetry and Painting." In his 13th section of the first volume, he gives some very ingenious remarks on two of Raphael's cartoons. Speaking of "Christ's charge

* "Paraclesis, or Consolations."

"charge to Peter," he says of one of the figures in the group of apostles, "Près de lui est placè un autre Apôtre "embarassè de sa contenance; on le "discerne pour être d'un temperament "melancholique à la mâigreur de son "visage livide, à sa barbe noire et plate, "à l'habitude de son corps, enfin a tous "les traits que les naturalistes ont as-"signés à ce temperament. Il se courbe; "et les yeux fixement attachés sur J. C. "il est devoré d'une jalousie morne pour "une choix dont il ne se plaindra point, "mais dont il conservera long tems un "vif ressentiment; enfin on reconnoit là "Judas aussi distinctement qu' à le voir "pendu au figuier, une bourse renversée "au col. Je n' ai point prêté d'esprit a "Raphael," &c. You see the ingenious Abbé is very positive; and yet you will immediately recollect, that the charge of "feed my sheep," to which this cartoon refers, was given to Peter after the resurrection, and when, consequently, Judas could not be present (John xxi. 16). If it be said, that this charge refers to the keys, which Peter carries in his bosom; a charge given long before: I answer, first, that the *sheep* in the back-ground is a presumption of the contrary; and, secondly, that the wounds in the feet and hands of Jesus, and the number of apostles present, which is only eleven, are a certain proof, that the fact to which this cartoon relates happened after the resurrection. The Abbé's mistake is of little moment in itself; but it serves to illustrate this observation, that the expression of painting is at the best very indefinite, and generally leaves scope to the ingenious critic *de prêter d'esprit* to the painter.

LETTER CIV.

Dr. Beattie to Dr. Blacklock.

Aberdeen, 27th May, 1770.

I CANNOT express how much I think myself indebted to your friendship, in entering so warmly into all my concerns, and in making out so readily, and at such length, the two critical articles. The shortest one was sent back, in course of post, to Mr. Kincaid*, from whom you would learn the reasons that induced me to make some alterations in the analysis you had there made of my book. The other paper I return in this packet. I have made a remark or two at the end, but no alterations. Indeed, how could I? you understand my philosophy as perfectly as I do; you express it much better, and you embellish it with a great many of your own sentiments, which, though new to me, are exceedingly apposite to my subject, and set some parts of it in a fairer light than I have been able to do in my book. I need not tell you, how happy I am in the thought, that this work of mine has your approbation; for I know you too well, to impute to mere civility the many handsome things you have said in praise of it. I know you approve it, because I know you incapable to say one thing and think another; and I do assure you, I would not forego your approbation to avoid the censure of fifty Mr. Humes. What do I say? Mr. Hume's censure I am so far from being ashamed of, that I think it does me honour. It is, next to his conversion, (which I have no reason to look for) the most desirable thing I have to expect from that quarter. I have heard, from very good authority, that he speaks of me and my book with very great bitterness (I own, I thought he would rather have affected to treat both with contempt); and that he says, I have not used him like a gentleman. He is quite right to set the matter upon that footing. It is an odious charge; it is an objection easily remembered, and, for that reason, will be often repeated, by his admirers; and it has this farther advantage, that being (in the present case) perfectly unintelligible, it cannot possibly be answered. The truth is, I, as a rational, moral, and immortal being, and something of a philosopher, treated him as a rational, moral, and immortal being, a sceptic, and an atheistical writer. My design was, not to make a book full of fashionable phrases and polite expressions, but to undeceive the public in regard to the merits of the sceptical philosophy, and the pretensions of its abettors. To say, that I ought not to have done this with plainness and spirit, is to say, in other words, that I ought either to have held my peace, or to have been a knave. In this case, I might perhaps have treated Mr. Hume as a gentleman, but I should not have treated

* The publisher,

treated society, and my own conscience, as became a man and a Christian. I have all along foreseen, and still foresee, that I shall have many reproaches, and cavils, and sneers, to encounter on this occasion; but I am prepared to meet them. I am not ashamed of my cause; and, if I may believe those whose good opinion I value as one of the chief blessings of life, I need not be ashamed of my work. You are certainly right in your conjecture, that it will not have a quick sale. Notwithstanding all my endeavours to render it perspicuous and entertaining, it is still necessary for the person who reads it *to think a little;* a task to which every reader will not submit. My subject too is unpopular, and my principles such as a man of the world would blush to acknowledge. How then can my book be popular? If it refund the expence of its publication, it will do as much as any person, who knows the present state of the literary world, can reasonably expect from it.

LETTER CV.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Inglis.

Aberdeen, 24th December 1770.

WHILE I lived in your neighbourhood, I often wished for an opportunity of giving you my opinion on a subject, in which I know you are very deeply interested; but one incident or other always put it out of my power. That subject is the education of your son, whom, if I mistake not, it is now high time to send to some public place of education. I have thought much on this subject; I have weighed every argument, that I could think of, on either side of the question. Much, you know, has been written upon it, and very plausible arguments have been offered, both for and against a public education. I set not much value upon these; speculating men are continually disputing, and the world is seldom the wiser. I have some little experience in this way; I have no hypothesis to mislead me; and the opinion or prejudice which I first formed upon the subject, was directly contrary to that, which experience has now taught me to entertain.

Could mankind lead their lives in that solitude which is so favourable to many of our most virtuous affections, I should be clearly on the side of a private education. But most of us, when we go out into the world, find difficulties in our way, which good principles and innocence alone will not qualify us to encounter; we must have some address and knowledge of the world different from what is to be learned in books, or we shall soon be puzzled, disheartened, or disgusted. The foundation of this knowledge is laid in the intercourse of school-boys, or at least of young men of the same age. When a boy is always under the direction of a parent or tutor, he acquires such a habit of looking up to them for advice, that he never learns to think or act for himself; his memory is exercised, indeed, in retaining their advice, but his invention is suffered to languish, till at last it becomes totally inactive. He knows, perhaps, a great deal of history or science; but he knows not how to conduct himself on those ever-changing emergencies, which are too minute and too numerous to be comprehended in any system of advice. He is astonished at the most common appearances, and discouraged with the most trifling (because unexpected) obstacles; and he is often at his wits end, where a boy of much less knowledge, but more experience, would instantly devise a thousand expedients. Conscious of his own superiority in some things, he wonders to find himself so much inferior in others; his vanity meets with continual rubs and disappointments, and disappointed vanity is very apt to degenerate into sullenness and pride; he despises, or affects to despise, his fellows, because, though superior in address, they are inferior in knowledge; and they, in their turn, despise that knowledge, which cannot teach the owner how to behave on the most common occasions. Thus he keeps at a distance from his equals, and they at a distance from him; and mutual contempt is the natural consequence.

Another inconvenience, attending private education, is the suppressing of the principle of emulation, without which it rarely happens that a boy prosecutes his studies with alacrity or success. I have heard private tutors complain, that they were obliged to have recourse to flattery or bribery to engage the attention of their pupil; and I need not observe, how improper

improper it is to set the example of such practices before children. True emulation, especially in young and ingenuous minds, is a noble principle; I have known the happiest effects produced by it; I never knew it to be productive of any vice. In all public schools it is, or ought to be, carefully cherished. Where it is wanting, in vain shall we preach up to children the dignity and utility of knowledge: the true appetite for knowledge is wanting: and when that is the case, whatever is crammed into the memory will rather surfeit and enfeeble, than improve the understanding. I do not mention the pleasure which young people take in the company of one another, and what a pity it is to deprive them of it. I need not remark, that friendships of the utmost stability and importance have often been founded on school-acquaintance; nor need I put you in mind, of what vast consequence to health are the exercises and amusements which boys contrive for themselves. I shall only observe further, that, when boys pursue their studies at home, they are apt to contract either a habit of idleness, or too close an attachment to reading; the former breeds innumerable diseases, both in the body and soul; the latter, by filling young and tender minds with more knowledge than they can either retain or arrange properly, is apt to make them superficial and inattentive, or, what is worse, to strain, and consequently impair, the faculties, by overstretching them. I have known several instances of both. The human mind is more improved by thoroughly understanding one science, one part of a science, or even one subject, than by a superficial knowledge of twenty sciences and a hundred different subjects; and I would rather wish my son to be thoroughly master of "Euclid's Elements," than to have the whole of "Chambers's "Dictionary" by heart.

The great inconvenience of public education arises from its being dangerous to morals. And indeed every condition and period of human life is liable to temptation. Nor will I deny, that our innocence, during the first part of life, is much more secure at home, than any where else; yet even at home, when we reach a certain age, it is not perfectly secure. Let young men be kept at the greatest distance from bad company, it will not be easy to keep them from bad books, to which, in these days, all persons may have easy access at all times. Let us, however, suppose the best; that both bad books and bad company keep away, and that the young man never leaves his parents' or tutor's side, till his mind be well furnished with good principles, and himself arrived at the age of reflection and caution: yet temptations must come at last; and when they come, will they have the less strength, because they are new, unexpected, and surprising? I fear not. The more the young man is surprised, the more apt will he be to lose his presence of mind, and consequently the less capable of self-government. Besides, if his passions are strong, he will be disposed to form comparisons between his past state of restraint, and his present of liberty, very much to the disadvantage of the former. His new associates will laugh at him for his reserve and preciseness; and his unacquaintance with their manners, and with the world, as it will render him the more obnoxious to their ridicule, will also disqualify him the more, both for supporting it with dignity, and also for defending himself against it. Suppose him to be shocked with vice at its first appearance, and often to call to mind the good precepts he received in his early days; yet when he sees others daily adventuring upon it without any apparent inconvenience; when he sees them more gay (to appearance), and better received among all their acquaintance than he is; and when he finds himself hooted at, and in a manner avoided and despised, on account of his singularity; it is a wonder, indeed, if he persist in his first resolutions, and do not now at last begin to think, that though his former teachers were well meaning people, they were by no means qualified to prescribe rules for his conduct. "The "world (he will say) is changed since "their time (and you will not easily "persuade young people that it changes "for the worse): we must comply with "the fashion, and live like other folks, "otherwise we must give up all hopes "of making a figure in it." And when he has got thus far, and begins to despise the opinions of his instructors, and to be dissatisfied with their conduct in regard

regard to him, I need not add, that the worst consequences may not unreasonably be apprehended. A young man, kept by himself at home, is never well known, even by his parents; because he is never placed in those circumstances which alone are able effectually to rouse and interest his passions, and consequently to make his character appear. His parents, therefore, or tutors, never know his weak side, nor what particular advices or cautions he stands most in need of; whereas, if he had attended a public school, and mingled in the amusements and pursuits of his equals, his virtues and his vices would have been disclosing themselves every day; and his teachers would have known what particular precepts and examples it was most expedient to inculcate upon him. Compare those who have had a public education with those who have been educated at home; and it will not be found, in fact, that the latter are, either in virtue or in talents, superior to the former. I speak, Madam, from observation of fact, as well as from attending to the nature of the thing.

LETTER CVI.

Dr. Beattie to the Right Hon. the Dowager Lady Forbes.*

Aberdeen, 12th October, 1772.

I WISH the merit of the 'Minstrel' were such as would justify all the kind things you have said of it. That it has merit every body would think me a hypocrite if I were to deny; I am willing to believe that it has even considerable merit; and I acknowledge, with much gratitude, that it has obtained from the public a reception far more favourable than I expected. There are in it many passages, no doubt, which I admire more than others do; and perhaps there are some passages which others are more struck with than I am. In all poetry this, I believe, is the case, more or less; but it is much more the case in poems of a sentimental cast, such as the 'Minstrel' is, than in those of the narrative species. In epic and dramatic poesy there is a standard acknowledged, by which we may estimate the merit of the piece; whether the narrative be probable, and the characters well-drawn and well preserved; whether all the events be conducive to the catastrophe: whether the action is unfolded in such a way as to command perpetual attention, and undiminished curiosity—these are points of which, in reading an epic poem, or tragedy, every reader possessed of good sense, or tolerable knowledge of the art, may hold himself to be a competent judge. Common life, and the general tenor of human affairs, is the standard to which these points may be referred, and according to which they may be estimated. But of sentimental poetry (if I may use the expression), there is no external standard. By it the heart of the reader must be touched at once, or it cannot be touched at all. Here the knowledge of critical rules, and a general acquaintance of human affairs, will not form a true critic; sensibility, and a lively imagination, are the qualities which alone constitute a true taste for sentimental poetry. Again, your ladyship must have observed, that some sentiments are common to all men; others peculiar to persons of a certain character. Of the former sort are those which Gray has so elegantly expressed in his 'Church-yard Elegy,' a poem which is universally understood and admired, not only for its poetical beauties, but also, and perhaps chiefly, for its expressing sentiments in which every man thinks himself interested, and which, at certain times, are familiar to all men. Now the sentiments, expressed in the 'Minstrel,' being not common to all men, but peculiar to persons of a certain cast, cannot possibly be interesting, because the generality of readers will not understand nor feel them so thoroughly as to think them natural. That a boy should take pleasure in darkness or a storm, in the noise of thunder, or the glare of lightning; should be more gratified with listening to music at a distance, than with mixing in the merriment occasioned by it; should like better to see every bird and beast happy and free, than to exert his ingenuity in destroying or ensnaring them—these, and such like sentiments

* Mrs. Dorothea Dale, widow of the Right Hon. William Lord Forbes.

timents, which, I think, would be natural to persons of a certain cast, will, I know, be condemned as unnatural by others, who have never felt them in themselves, nor observed them in the generality of mankind. Of all this I was sufficiently aware before I published the "Minstrel," and, therefore, never expected that it would be a popular poem. Perhaps, too, the structure of the verse (which, though agreeable to some, is not to all) and the scarcity of incidents, may contribute to make it less relished, than it would have been, if the plan had been different in these particulars.

From the questions your Ladyship is pleased to propose in the conclusion of your letter, as well as from some things I have had the honour to hear you advance in conversation, I find you are willing to suppose, that, in Edwin, I have given only a picture of myself, as I was in my younger days. I confess the supposition is not groundless. I have made him take pleasure in the scenes in which I took pleasure, and entertain sentiments similar to those, of which, even in my early youth, I had repeated experience. The scenery of a mountainous country, the ocean, the sky, thoughtfulness and retirement, and sometimes melancholy objects and ideas, had charms in my eyes, even when I was a school-boy; and at a time when I was so far from being able to express, that I did not understand, my own feelings, or perceive the tendency of such pursuits and amusements: and as to poetry and music, before I was ten years old, I could play a little on the violin, and was as much master of Homer and Virgil, as Pope's and Dryden's translations could make me. But I am ashamed to write so much on a subject so trifling as myself, and my own works. Believe me, madam, nothing but your Ladyship's commands could have induced me to do it.

LETTER CVII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

I REJOICE to hear that Mr. Garrick is so well as to be able to appear in tragedy. It is in vain to indulge one's self in unavailing complaints, otherwise I could rail by the hour at dame Fortune, for placing me beyond the reach of that arch-magician, as Horace would have called him. I well remember, and I think can never forget, how he once affected me in Macbeth, and made me almost throw myself over the front seat of the two-shilling gallery. I wish I had another opportunity of risking my neck and nerves in the same cause. To fall by the hands of Garrick and Shakespeare would ennoble my memory to all generations. To be serious, if all actors were like this one, I do not think it would be possible for a person of sensibility to outlive the representation of Hamlet, Lear, or Macbeth: which, by the bye, seems to suggest a reason for that mixture of comedy and tragedy of which our great poet was so fond, and which the Frenchified critics think such an intolerable outrage both against nature and decency. Against nature, it is no outrage at all: the inferior officers of a court know little of what passes among kings and statesmen; and may be very merry, when their superiors are very sad; and if so, the Porter's soliloquy in Macbeth may be a very just imitation of nature. And I can never accuse of indecency the man, who, by the introduction of a little unexpected merriment, saves me from a disordered head, or a broken heart. If Shakespeare knew his own powers, he must have seen the necessity of tempering his tragic rage, by a mixture of comic ridicule; otherwise there was some danger of his running into greater excesses than deer-stealing, by sporting with the lives of all the people of taste in these realms. Other playwrights must conduct their approaches to the human heart with the utmost circumspection, a single false step may make them lose a great deal of ground; but Shakespeare made his way to it at once, and could make his audience burst their sides this moment, and break their hearts the next.—I have often seen Hamlet performed by the underlings of the theatre, but none of these seemed to understand what they were about. Hamlet's character, though perfectly natural, is so very uncommon, that few, even of our critics, can enter into it. Sorrow, indignation, revenge, and consciousness of his own irresolution, tear his heart; the peculiarity of his circumstances often obliges him to counterfeit madness, and the storm of passions with-

in him often drives him to the verge of real madness. This produces a situation so interesting, and a conduct so complicated, as none but Shakespeare could have had the courage to describe, or even to invent, and none but Garrick will ever be able to exhibit.—Excuse this rambling: I know you like the subject; and for my part I like it so much, that when I once get in, I am not willing to find my way out of it.

I have enclosed two papers; one is an epitaph which I wrote (at the Doctor's desire) for Mrs. Gregory, and which has one kind of merit, not very common in these compositions, that of being perfectly true: the other is a tune which you desired me to send you, and which, if it were what is pretended, would indeed be a very great curiosity; but I am apt to think that it has been composed in modern times, and even since the invention of the present musical system. Yet I have been told, by pretty good authority, that the Greeks believe it to be as ancient as the days of Theseus.

The book of second-sight has not, I fear, given you much entertainment. The tales are ill-told, and ill-chosen, and the language so barbarous as to be in many places unintelligible, even to a Scotsman. I have heard many better stories of the second-sight, than any this author has given, attested by such persons, and accompanied by such circumstances, as to preclude contradiction, though not suspicion. All our Highlanders believe in this second-sight: but the instances, in which it is said to operate, are generally so ambiguous, and the revelations supposed to be communicated by it so frivolous, that I cannot bring myself to acquiesce in it. Indeed this same historian has made me more incredulous than I was before; for his whole book betrays an excess of folly and weakness. Were its revelations important, I should be less inclined to unbelief: but to suppose the Deity working a miracle, in order to announce a marriage, or the arrival of a poor stranger, or the making of a coffin, would require such evidence as has not yet attended any of these tales, and is indeed what scarce any kind of evidence could make one suppose. These communications are all made to the ignorant, the superstitious, and generally to the young; I never heard of a man of learning, sense, or observation, that was favoured with any of them; a strong presumption against their credibility. I have been told, that the inhabitants of some parts of the Alps do also lay claim to a sort of second-sight: and I believe the same superstition, or something like it, may be found in many other countries, where the face of nature, and the solitary life of the natives, tend to impress the imagination with melancholy. The Highlands of Scotland are a picturesque, but gloomy region. Long tracts of solitary mountains covered with heath and rocks, and often obscured by mist; narrow vallies, thinly inhabited, and bounded by precipices that resound for ever with the fall of torrents; a soil so rugged, and a climate so dreary, as to admit neither the amusements of pasturage, nor the cheerful toils of agriculture; the mournful dashing of waves along the friths and lakes that every where intersect this country; the portentous sounds, which every change of the wind, and every increase and diminution of the waters, is apt to raise in a region full of rocks and hollow cliffs and caverns; the grotesque and ghastly appearance of such a landscape, especially by the light of the moon;—objects like these diffuse an habitual gloom over the fancy, and give it that romantic cast, that disposes to invention, and that melancholy, which inclines one to the fear of unseen things and unknown events. It is observable too, that the antient Scottish Highlanders had scarce any other way of supporting themselves, than by hunting, fishing, or war; professions, that are continually exposed to the most fatal accidents. Thus, almost every circumstance in their lot tended to rouse and terrify the imagination. Accordingly, their poetry is uniformly mournful; their music melancholy and dreadful, and their superstitions are all of the gloomy kind. The fairies confined their gambols to the lowlands: the mountains were haunted with giants, and angry ghosts, and funeral processions, and other prodigies of direful import. That a people, beset with such real and imaginary bugbears, should fancy themselves dreaming, even when awake, of corpses, and graves, and coffins, and other terrible things, seems natural enough; but that their visions ever tended to any real or useful discovery, I am much inclined to doubt. Not that I mean

mean to deny the existence of ghosts, or to call in question the accounts of extraordinary revelations, granted to individuals, with which both history and tradition abound. But in all cases, where such accounts are entitled to credit, or supported by tolerable evidence, it will be found, that they referred to something which it concerned men to know; the overthrow of kingdoms, the death of great persons, the detection of atrocious crimes, or the preservation of important lives.—But I take up too much of your time with these matters.

LETTER CVIII.

Mrs. Montagu to Dr. Beattie.

London, 13th December, 1772.

You ask me why the eastern nations are, in their poetical compositions, so full of glaring images, and exaggerated metaphors? One reason, I presume, is, that they are little addicted to write or read prose. Fiction and bombast are called *le Phœbus*, in the French language: the marvellous is affected in poetry more than in prose; exaggeration is a road to the marvellous. The first passage from hieroglyphic representation to imitation by words, must naturally be by images. The Greeks, by a certain subtilty of parts, and the popular character of the philosophers, addicted themselves greatly to metaphysics; this banished from the learned the grosser images. They cultivated all the parts of rhetoric; thence grew precision, and consequently the figurative style became less in use; words acquired certain and exact signification; and Socrates, the best and most modest of men, would inculcate the maxim, that the gods hate impudence, without delineating an eagle, a crocodile, a sea-horse, and a fish, as the Egyptian sages had done, to teach it. Many of the high pompous and high sounding titles you take notice of, as given to eastern princes, are verbal translations of the symbols of regal power, executive justice, &c. As to Homer, we know little about him; he seems to paint exactly from the life, as our Shakespeare did, and as the first-rate geniuses will always do, where there are not established laws of criticism, to which they must bend, and which set up a pattern and mode to work by. You will find Æschylus an hieroglyphical, symbolical, allegorical writer; his works smell of Egypt, and the mythology of his country. Sophocles saw that the historical muse of Herodotus was admired, he therefore takes a more middle flight between history and poetry. Euripides finds his countrymen still more refined, and is a moral philosopher, as well as poet. He writes to Socrates, and the disciples of Socrates. Something of the pomp and luxury of an Asiatic poet's descriptions certainly arises from the wealth and plenty of his country, and the display of gold and jewels, and the perfumes, &c. in the palaces of the great. Ossian exaggerates only the strength and valour of his heroes, and the beauty of his women. As poetry professes to please and surprise, it will always embellish and magnify. We owe much to the metaphysical turn of the Greeks, for refining our ideas, and spiritualizing them. While only fables and panegyrics were fabricated by the poets, clear, and adequate, and well-proportioned phrase could never be established. Obscurity was necessary, exaggeration would be sought, and though Homer, who sung to the distant posterity of Agamemnon, &c. was not under a necessity of magnifying his character beyond the ordinary proportion of human qualities, I dare say Agamemnon's family-bard, and the rest of the heroes' poets, attributed many extravagant exploits to them. As to the passions, I believe them to be much more violent in warm countries; and as the Asiatic life is more indolent, the body employed in less motion, and the mind less diverted by variety of objects, it desires what it likes with more vehement and uninterrupted attention. These are my random thoughts upon your questions; but as they are merely my own, I have no great confidence in them.

LETTER CIX.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Aberdeen, 15th February, 1773.

I AM deeply sensible of your goodness, in communicating to me, in so tender and soothing a manner, the news of a misfortune, which is indeed one of the severest I have ever felt. For these two months past my spirits have been unusually depressed, so that I am but ill prepared for so terrible a stroke. Of the loss which society, and which his family have received; of the incomparable loss which I sustain, by the death of this excellent person, I can say nothing; my heart is too full, and I have not yet recovered myself so far, as to think or speak coherently, on this, or any other subject.

You justly observe, that his friends may derive no small consolation, from the circumstance of his death having been without pain*, and from the well-grounded hope we may entertain, of his having made a happy change. But I find I cannot proceed; I thought I should have been able to give you some of my thoughts on this occasion; but the subject overpowers me. Write to me as soon, and as fully as you can, of the situation of his family, and whatever you may think I would wish to know. I shall endeavour to follow your kind advice, and to reconcile myself to this great affliction, as much as I am able. My reason, I trust, is fully reconciled: I am thoroughly convinced that every dispensation of Providence is wise and good; and that by making a proper improvement of the evils of this life, we may convert them all into blessings. It becomes us therefore to adore the Supreme Benefactor, when he takes away, as well as when he gives; for He is wise and beneficent in both.

* Dr. Gregory was found dead in bed, probably from an attack of the gout, to which he was subject.

LETTER CX.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1773.

I HAVE just now finished the business of a melancholy winter. When I wrote to you last, which was in January, my health and spirits were in a very low state. In this condition, the unexpected death of the best of men, and of friends, came upon me with a weight, which at any time I should have thought almost unsupportable, but which, at that time, was afflicting to a degree which human abilities alone could never have endured. But Providence, ever beneficent and gracious, has supported me under this heavy dispensation; and I hope, I shall in time be enabled to review it, even with that cheerful submission, which becomes a christian, and which none but a christian can entertain. I have a thousand things to say on this most affecting subject; but for your sake, madam, and for my own, I shall not, at present, enter upon them. Nobody can be more sensible than you are, of the irreparable loss, which not only his own family and friends, but which society in general, sustains by the loss of this excellent person: and I need not tell you, for of this too I know you are sensible, that of all his friends, (his own family excepted) none has so much cause of sorrow, on this occasion, as I. I should never have done, if I were to enter into the particulars of his kindness to me. For these many years past, I have had the happiness to be of his intimate acquaintance. He took part in all my concerns; and, as I concealed nothing from him, he knew my heart and my character as well as I myself did; only the partiality of his friendship made him think more favourable of me than I deserved. In all my difficulties, I applied to him for advice and comfort, both which he had the art of communicating in such a way as never failed to compose and strengthen my mind. His zeal in promoting my interest and reputation is very generally known. In a word, (for I must endeavour to quit a subject, which will long be oppressive to my heart) my inward quiet, and external prosperity, were objects of his particular, and unwearied care; and he never

never missed any opportunity of promoting both, to the utmost of his power. I wrote to his son soon after the fatal event; and have had the comfort to hear from several hands, that he, and his sisters, and the whole family, behave with a propriety that charms every body. In continuing his father's lectures, he acquits himself to universal satisfaction.

LETTER CXI.

The same to the same.

Aberdeen, 15th October, 1773.

I PURPOSELY delayed for a few days to answer your letter, that I might be at leisure to think seriously before I should venture to give my opinion, in regard to the important matter, about which you did me the honour to consult me. A religious education is indeed the greatest of all earthly blessings to a young man; especially in these days, when one is in such danger of receiving impressions of a contrary tendency. I hope, and earnestly wish, that this, and every other blessing, may be the lot of your nephew, who seems to be accomplished, and promising, far beyond his years.

I must confess, I am strongly prepossessed in favour of that mode of education that takes place in the English universities. I am well aware at the same time, that in those seminaries, there are, to some young men, many more temptations to idleness and dissipation, than in our colleges in Scotland; but there are also, if I mistake not, better opportunities of study to a studious young man, and the advantages of a more respectable and more polite society, to such as are discreet and sober. The most valuable parts of human literature, I mean the Greek and Latin classics, are not so completely taught in Scotland as in England; and I fear it is no advantage, I have sometimes known it a misfortune, to those young men of distinction that come to study with us, that they find too easy, and too favourable an admittance to balls, assemblies, and other diversions of a like kind, where the fashion not only permits, but requires, that a particular attention be paid to the younger part of the female world. A youth of fortune, with the English language, and English address, soon becomes an object of consideration to a raw girl; and equally so, perhaps, though not altogether on the same account, to her parents. Our long vacations, too, in the colleges in Scotland, though a convenience to the native student, (who commonly spends those intervals at home with his parents) are often dangerous to the students from England; who being then set free from the restraints of academical discipline, and at a distance from their parents or guardians, are too apt to forget, that it was for the purpose of study, not of amusement, they were sent into this country.

All, or most of these inconveniencies, may be avoided at an English university, provided a youth have a discreet tutor, and be himself of a sober and studious disposition. There, classical erudition receives all the attentions and honours it can claim; and there the French philosophy, of course, is seldom held in very high estimation; there, at present, a regard to religion is fashionable; there, the recluseness of a college-life, the wholesome severities of academical discipline, the authority of the university, and several other circumstances I could mention, prove very powerful restraints to such of the youth as have any sense of true honour, or any regard to their real interest.

We, in Scotland, boast of our professors, that they give regular lectures in all the sciences, which the students are obliged to attend; a part of literary œconomy which is but little attended to in the universities of England. But I will venture to affirm, from experience, that if a professor does no more than deliver a set of lectures, his young audience will be little the wiser for having attended him. The most profitable part of my time is that which I employ in examinations, or in Socratical dialogue with my pupils, or in commenting upon antient authors, all which may be done by a tutor in a private apartment, as well as by a professor in a public school. Lectures indeed I do, and must give; in order to add solemnity to the truths I would inculcate; and partly too, in compliance with the fashion, and for the sake of my own character; (for this, though not the most difficult part of our business, is that which shews the speaker

to most advantage) but I have always found the other methods, particularly the Socratic form of dialogue, much more effectual in fixing the attention, and improving the faculties of the student.

I will not, madam, detain you longer with this comparison: it is my duty to give you my real sentiments, and you will be able to gather them from these imperfect hints. If it is determined that your nephew shall be sent to an university in Scotland, he may, I believe, have as good a chance for improvement at Edinburgh or Glasgow, as at any other: if the law is to form any part of his studies, he ought, by all means, to go to one or other of these places; as we have no law-professors in any other part of this kingdom, except one in King's college, Aberdeen, whose office has been a sinecure for several generations. Whether he should make choice of Edinburgh or of Glasgow, I am at a loss to say: I was formerly well enough acquainted with the professors of both those societies, but, *tempora mutantur*, Dr. Reid is a very learned, ingenious, and worthy man, so is Dr. Blair; they are both clergymen; so that, I am confident, your nephew might lodge safely and profitably with either. Whether they would choose to accept of the office of tutor to any young gentleman, they themselves only can determine; some professors would decline it, on account of the laboriousness of their office: it is partly on this account, but chiefly on account of my health, that I have been obliged to decline every offer of this sort.

LETTER CXII.

The same to the same.

Aberdeen, 3d May, 1774.

I AM greatly obliged and honoured by what the hierarchy have done, and are doing for me. Of Dr. Law's attack I shall take no further notice.

I received a letter, two days ago, from Dr. Hurd*. It is a very kind letter, and much in praise of the "Min-"strel." Lord Chesterfield's letters, he says, are well calculated for the purpose of teaching "manners without morals" to our young people of quality. This opinion I had indeed begun to form concerning them, from some short extracts in the news-papers. In one of these extracts I was greatly surprised to see such a pompous encomium on Bolinbroke's *Patriot King;* which has always appeared to me a mere *vox et præterea nihil.* Plato was one of the first who introduced the fashion of giving us fine words instead of good sense; in this, as in his other faults, he has been successfully imitated by Shaftesbury; but I know not whether he, or any other author, has ever put together so many words, with so little meaning, as Bolinbroke, in his papers on patriotism.

Lord Monboddo's second volume has been published some time. It is, I think, much better than the first, and contains much learning, and not a little ingenuity: but can never be very interesting, except to those who aim at a grammatical and critical knowledge of the Greek tongue. Lord Kaimes's Sketches I have seen. They are not much different from what I expected. A man, who reads thirty years, with a view to collect facts, in support of two or three whimsical theories, may, no doubt, collect a great number of facts, and make a very large book. The world will wonder when they hear of a modern philosopher, who seriously denies the existence of such a principle as universal benevolence;—a point, of which no good man can entertain a doubt for a single moment.

I am sorry for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like; but I liked many things in his genius: and I was sorry to find, last summer, that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However, when next we meet, all this will be forgotten; and the jealousy of authors, which, Dr. Gregory used to say, was next in rancour to that of physicians, will be no more.

I am glad that you are pleased with the additional stanzas of the second canto of the "Minstrel;" but I fear you are too indulgent. How it will be relished by the public, I cannot even guess. I know all its faults; but I cannot remedy them, for they are faults in the first concoction; they result from the imperfection of the plan. I am much obliged to you, Madam, for advising that two copies should be presented to their Majesties, which, Dilly writes me word, has

* Now Lord Bishop of Worcester.

has been done by my good friend, Dr. Majendie. This honour I meant to have solicited, when the second edition came out, which will be soon. My reason for this delay was, that the first edition having been put to the press, and some sheets of it printed off before I knew, I had it not in my power to order any copies on fine paper. But it is better as it is: the paper of the copy I have, is not at all amiss.

My "Essay on Laughter" advances but slowly. I have all my materials at hand; but my health obliges me to labour very moderately in reducing them into order. I am very unwilling to relinquish the hope of receiving from you, madam, some assistance in completing my volume. I beg you will think of it. Perhaps you may find more leisure when you come into the north.

Mr. Mason has never answered the letter I wrote to him, concerning the subscription. I guessed from the tenor of his letters, that he is, (as you say) out of humour with the world. Mr. Dilly writes me word, that he says he is tempted to throw his *Life of Mr. Gray* (which is now finished, or nearly so) into the fire, so much is he dissatisfied with the late decision on literary property. By the way, I heartily wish the legislature may, by a new law, set this matter on a proper footing. Literature must suffer, if this decision remains unobviated.

LETTER CXIII.

The Rev. Dr. Porteus to Dr. Beattie.

Hunton, near Maidstone, Kent, July 24, 1774.

I AM desired, by one of the Episcopal bench *, whose name I am not yet at liberty to mention, to ask you, whether you have any objections to taking orders in the Church of England. If you have not, there is a living now vacant in his gift, worth near five hundred pounds a-year, which will be at your service.

Be pleased to send me your answer to this, as soon as possible, and direct it to me at Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, where I shall probably be, before your letter can reach me. I feel myself happy, in being the instrument of communicating to you so honourable and advantageous a proof of that esteem, which your literary labours have secured to you, amongst all ranks of people.

* Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Winchester.

LETTER CXIV.

Dr. Beattie to the Rev. Dr. Porteus.

Peterhead, 4th August, 1774.

I HAVE made many efforts to express, in something like adequate language, my grateful sense of the honour done me by the Right Reverend Prelate, who makes the offer conveyed to me in your most friendly letter of the 24th July. But every new effort serves only to convince me, more and more, how unequal I am to the task.

When I consider the extraordinary reception which my weak endeavours in the cause of truth have met with, and compare the greatness of my success, with the insignificance of my merit, what reasons have I not to be thankful and humble! to be ashamed that I have done so little public service, and to regret that so little *is in my power!* to rouse every power of my nature to purposes of benevolent tendency, in order to justify, by my intentions at least, the unexampled generosity of my benefactors!

My religious opinions would no doubt, if I were to declare them, sufficiently account for, and vindicate, my becoming a member of the Church of England: and I flatter myself, that my studies, way of life, and habits of thinking, have always been such, as would not disqualify me for an ecclesiastical profession. If I were to become a clergyman, the Church of England would certainly be my choice; as I think, that, in regard to church-government, and church-service, it has many great and peculiar advantages. And I am so far from having any natural disinclination to holy orders, that I have several times, at different periods of my life, been disposed to enter into them, and have directed my studies accordingly. Various accidents, however, prevented me; some of them pretty remarkable, and such as I think I might, without presumption, ascribe to a particular interposition of Providence.

The offer, now made me, is great and generous beyond all expectation. I am

well aware of all the advantages and honours that would attend my accepting, and yet, I find myself obliged, in conscience, to decline it; as I lately did another of the same kind (though not so considerable) that was made me, on the part of another English gentleman. The reasons which did then, and do now, determine me, I beg leave, sir, briefly to lay before you.

I wrote the "Essay on Truth," with the certain prospect of raising many enemies, with very faint hopes of attracting the public attention, and without any views of advancing my fortune. I published it, however, because I thought it might probably do a little good, by bringing to nought, or at least lessening the reputation of, that wretched system of sceptical philosophy, which had made a most alarming progress, and done incredible mischief to this country. My enemies have been at great pains to represent my views, in that publication, as very different: and that my principal, or only motive was, to make a book, and, if possible, to raise myself higher in the world. So that, if I were now to accept preferment in the church, I should be apprehensive, that I might strengthen the hands of the gainsayer, and give the world some ground to believe, that my love of truth was not quite so ardent, or so pure, as I had pretended.

Besides, might it not have the appearance of levity and insincerity, and, by some, be construed into a want of principle, if I were at these years, (for I am now thirty-eight) to make such an important change in my way of life, and to quit, with no other *apparent* motive than that of bettering my circumstances, that church of which I have hitherto been a member? If my book has any tendency to do good, as I flatter myself it has, I would not, for the wealth of the Indies, do any thing to counteract that tendency; and I am afraid, that tendency might in some measure be counteracted, (at least in this country) if I were to give the adversary the least ground to charge me with inconsistency. It is true, that the force of my reasonings cannot be *really* affected by my character; truth is truth, whoever be the speaker: but even truth itself becomes less respectable, when spoken, or supposed to be spoken, by insincere lips.

It has also been hinted to me, by several persons of very sound judgment, that what I have written, or may hereafter write, in favour of religion, has a chance of being more attended to, if I continue a layman, than if I were to become a clergyman. Nor am I without apprehensions (though some of my friends think them ill-founded) that, from entering so late in life, and from so remote a province, into the Church of England, some degree of ungracefulness, particularly in pronunciation, might adhere to my performances in public, sufficient to render them less pleasing, and consequently less useful.

Most of these reasons were repeatedly urged upon me, during my stay in England, last summer; and I freely own, that, the more I consider them, the more weight they seem to have. And from the peculiar manner in which the King has been graciously pleased to distinguish me, and from other circumstances, I have some ground to presume, that it is his Majesty's pleasure, that I should continue where I am, and employ my leisure hours in prosecuting the studies I have begun. This I can find time to do more effectually in Scotland than in England, and in Aberdeen than in Edinburgh; which, by the bye, was one of my chief reasons for declining the Edinburgh professorship. The business of my professorship here is indeed toilsome: but I have, by fourteen years practice, made myself so much master of it, that it now requires little mental labour; and our long summer vacation, of seven months, leaves me at my own disposal, for the greatest and best part of the year; a situation favourable to literary projects, and now become necessary to my health.

Soon after my return home, in autumn last, I had occasion to write to the Archbishop of York, on this subject. I specified my reasons for giving up all thoughts of church-preferment; and his Grace was pleased to approve of them; nay, he condescended so far as to say, they did me honour. I told his Grace, moreover, that I had already given a great deal of trouble to my noble and generous patrons in England, and could not think of being any longer a burden to them, now that his Majesty had so graciously and so generously made for me a provision equal to my wishes, and such as puts it in my power to obtain,

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in Scotland, every convenience of life, to which I have any title, or any inclination to aspire.

I must, therefore, make it my request to you, that you would present my humble respects, and most thankful acknowledgments, to the eminent person, at whose desire you wrote your last letter, (whose name I hope you will not be under the necessity of concealing from me) and assure him, that, though I have taken the liberty to decline his generous offer, I shall, to the last hour of my life, preserve a most grateful remembrance of the honour he has condescended to confer upon me; and, to prove myself not altogether unworthy of his goodness, shall employ that health and leisure which Providence may hereafter afford me, in opposing infidelity, heresy, and error, and in promoting sound literature, and christian truth, to the utmost of my power.

LETTER CXV.

The same to the same.

Aberdeen, 4th March, 1775.

I HAVE just finished a hasty perusal of Dr. Johnson's Journey. It contains many things worthy of the author, and is, on the whole, very entertaining. His account of "the Isles," is, I dare say, very just; I never was there, and therefore can say nothing of them, from my own knowledge. His accounts of *some* facts, relating to other parts of Scotland, are not unexceptionable. Either he must have been mis-informed, or he must have misunderstood his informer, in regard to several of his remarks on the improvement of the country. I am surprised at one of his mistakes, which leads him once or twice into perplexity, and false conjecture:—he seems not to have known, that, in the common language of Scotland, *Irish* and *Earse* are both used to denote the speech of the Scots Highlanders; and are as much synonimous (at least in many parts of the kingdom,) as *Scotch* and *Scottish*. *Irish* is generally thought the genteeler appellation, and *Earse* the vulgar and colloquial. His remarks on the *trees* of Scotland, must greatly surprise a native. In some of our provinces, trees cannot be reared by any method of cultivation we have yet discovered; in some, where trees flourish extremely well, they are not *much* cultivated, because they are not necessary: but in others, we have store of wood, and forests of great extent, and of great antiquity. I am sorry to see in Johnson some asperities, that seem to be the effect of national prejudice. If he thinks himself thoroughly acquainted with the character of the Scots as a nation, he is greatly mistaken. The Scots have virtues, and the Scots have faults, of which he seems to have had no particular information. I am one of those who wish to see the English spirit and English manners prevail over the whole island; for I think the English have a generosity and openness of nature, which many of us want. But we are not all, without exception, a nation of cheats and liars, as Johnson seems willing to believe, and to represent us. Of the better sort of our people, the character is just *the* reverse. I admire Johnson's genius; I esteem him for his virtues; I shall ever cherish a grateful remembrance of the civilities I have received from him: I have often, in this country, exerted myself in defence both of his character and writings: but there are in this book several things which I cannot defend. His unbelief, in regard to Ossian, I am not surprised at; but I wonder greatly at his credulity in regard to the second-sight. I cannot imagine, on what grounds he could say, that, in the universities of Scotland, every master of arts may be a doctor when he pleases. I never heard of such a thing, and I have been connected with our universities, ever since I was a boy. Our method of giving doctor's degrees I do not approve of; but we proceed on a principle quite different from what Dr. Johnson mentions.

LETTER CXVI.

Mrs. Montagu to Dr. Beattie.

Tunbridge-wells, September 3, 1773.

IT was not without trembling and horror, I read the account of your overturn, and the dangerous circumstances with which it was attended. The traveller, who is obliged to traverse a pathless wilderness, or in a frail boat to cross the angry ocean, devoutly prays to the Omnipotent,

Omnipotent, to assist and preserve him; the occasion awakens his fears, and animates his devotion: but it is only from experience and reflection we are taught to consider every day, which passes in safety, and closes in peace, as a mercy. If I had known when you had set out from Denton, how near to a precipice you would have been thrown, I should more earnestly have prayed for your preservation through the journey; but the incident at once makes me sensible, that our safety depends, not on the road, but the hand that upholds and guides us.

I left Denton, the first day of August. On the second, by noon, I reached the episcopal palace of our friend, the Archbishop of York*, at Bishop's Thorpe. I had before visited him at his family-seat at Brodsworth. The man, who has a character of his own, is little changed by varying his situation: I can only say, that at his family-seat, I found him the most of a prelate of any gentleman, and at his palace, the most of a gentleman I had ever seen. Native dignity is the best ground-work of assumed and special dignity. We talked a great deal of you; the subject was copious and pleasant. We considered you, as a poet, with admiration; as a philosopher, with respect; as a Christian, with veneration; and as a friend, with affection. His Grace's health is not quite what we could wish. I could indulge myself in no longer than one day's delay at Bishop's Thorpe. I then made the best of my way to London, and, after a very short stay there, came to Tunbridge. I have the happiness of having Mrs. Carter in my house, and Mrs. Vesey is not at a quarter of a mile's distance; thus, though I live secluded from the general world, I have the society of those I love best. I propose to stay here about three weeks, then I return to London, to prepare for my expedition to the south of France. I have written to a gentleman at Montauban to endeavour to get for me a large house, in any part of that town. I am assured that the climate of Montauban is very delightful; the air is dry, but not piercing, as at Montpelier. There is but little society, but there are some provincial *noblesse*, amongst whom I hope to find some who are more in the *ton* of Louis XIV.'s court, than I should at Versailles. It is long before the polished manners of a court, arrive at the distant regions of a great country; but when there, they acquire a permanent establishment. At Paris, the minister, or the favourite of the day, is taken for the model, and there is a perpetual change of manners. I think with some pleasure of escaping the gloom of our winter, and the bustle of London, and passing my time in the blessings of cheerful tranquillity, and soft sunshine; at the same time, there is something painful in removing so far from one's dearest friends.

I wish much to see the verses on the pretty incident of the dove's alighting on Shakespeare's statue. Of whatever nature and disposition the animal had been, he might have been presented as a symbol of Shakespeare. The gravity and deep thought of the bird of wisdom; the sublime flight of the eagle to the starry regions, and the throne of Jove; the pensive song of the nightingale, when she shuns the noise of folly, and sooths the midnight visionary; the pert jack-daw, that faithfully repeats the chit-chat of the market or the shop; the sky-lark, that, soaring, seems to sing to the denizens of the air, and set her music to the tone of beings of another region,—would all assort with the genius of universal Shakespeare.

* Hon. Dr. Hay Drummond, at that time Archbishop of York.

LETTER CXVII.

Dr. Beattie to Mrs. Montagu.

Aberdeen, 17th September, 1775.

YOUR reflections on the little disaster, with which our journey concluded, exactly coincide with mine. I agree with Hawkesworth, that the peril and the deliverance are equally providential; and I wonder he did not see that both the one and other may be productive of the very best effects. These little accidents and trials are necessary to put us in mind of that superintending goodness, to which we are indebted for every breath we draw, and of which, in the hour of tranquillity, many of us are too apt to be forgetful. But you, madam, forget nothing which a Christian

tian ought to remember; and therefore I hope and pray that Providence may defend you from every alarm. By the way, there are several things, besides that preface to which I just now referred, in the writings of Hawkesworth, that shew an unaccountable perplexity of mind in regard to some of the principles of natural religion. I observed, in his conversation, that he took a pleasure in ruminating upon riddles, and puzzling questions, and calculations; and he seems to have carried something of the same temper into his moral and theological researches. His "Almoran and Hamet" is a strange confused narrative, and leaves upon the mind of the reader some disagreeable impressions in regard to the ways of Providence; and from the theory of *pity*, which he has given us somewhere in the "Adventurer," one would suspect that he was no enemy to the philosophy of Hobbes. However, I am disposed to impute all this rather to a vague way of thinking, than to any perversity of heart or understanding. Only I wish, that in his last work he had been more ambitious to tell the plain truth, than to deliver to the world a wonderful story. I confess, that from the first I was inclined to consider his vile portrait of the manners of Otaheite, as in part fictitious; and I am now assured, upon the very best authority, that Dr. Solander disavows some of those narrations, or at least declares them to be grossly mis-represented. There is, in almost all the late books of travels I have seen, a disposition on the part of the author to recommend licentious theories. I would not object to the truth of any fact, that is warranted by the testimony of competent witnesses. But how few of our travellers are competent judges of the facts they relate! How few of them know any thing accurately, of the language of those nations, whose laws, religion, and moral sentiments, they pretend to describe! And how few of them are free from that inordinate love of the marvellous, which stimulates equally the vanity of the writer, and the curiosity of the reader! Suppose a Japanese crew to arrive in England, take in wood and water, exchange a few commodities; and, after a stay of three months, to set sail for their own country, and there set forth a history of the English government, religion, and manners: it is, I think, highly probable, that, for one truth, they would deliver a score of falsehoods. But Europeans, it will be said, have more sagacity, and know more of mankind. Be it so: but this advantage is not without inconveniences, sufficient perhaps to counterbalance it. When a European arrives in any remote part of the globe, the natives, if they know any thing of his country, will be apt to form no favourable opinion of his intentions, with regard to their liberties; if they know nothing of him, they will yet keep aloof, on account of his strange language, complexion, and accoutrements. In either case he has little chance of understanding their laws, manners, and principles of action, except by a long residence in the country, which would not suit the views of one traveller in five thousand. He therefore picks up a few strange plants and animals, which he may do with little trouble or danger; and, at his return to Europe, is welcomed by the literati, as a philosophic traveller of most accurate observation, and unquestionable veracity. He describes, perhaps with tolerable exactness, the soils, plants, and other irrational curiosities of the new country, which procures credit to what he has to say of the people; though his accuracy in describing the material phenomena, is no proof of his capacity to explain the moral. One can easily dig to the root of a plant, but it is not so easy to penetrate the motive of an action; and till the motive of an action be known, we are no competent judges of its morality, and in many cases the motive of an action is not to be known without a most intimate knowledge of the language and manners of the agent. Our traveller then delivers a few facts of the moral kind, which perhaps he does not understand, and from them draws some inferences suitable to the taste of the times, or to a favourite hypothesis. He tells us of a Californian, who sold his bed in a morning, and came with tears in his eyes to beg it back at night; whence, he very wisely infers, that the poor Californians are hardly one degree above the brutes in understanding, for that they have neither foresight nor memory sufficient to direct their conduct on the most common occasions of life.

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In a word, they are quite a different species of animal from the European; and it is a gross mistake to think, that all mankind are descended from the same first parents. But one needs not go so far as to California, in quest of men who sacrifice a future good to a present gratification. In the metropolis of Great Britain one may meet with many reputed Christians, who would act the same part, for the pleasure of carousing half-a-day in a gin-shop. Again, to illustrate the same important truth, that man is a beast, or very little better, we are told of another nation, on the banks of the Orellana, so wonderfully stupid, that they cannot reckon beyond the number three, but point to the hair of their head, whenever they would signify a greater number; as if four, and four thousand, were to them equally inconceivable. But, whence it comes to pass, that these people are capable of speech, or of reckoning at all, even so far as to three, is a difficulty, of which our historian attempts not the solution. But till he shall solve it, I must beg leave to tell him, that the one half of his tale contradicts the other as effectually, as if he had told us of a people, who were so weak as to be incapable of bodily exertion, and yet, that he had seen one of them lift a stone of a hundred weight.—I beg your pardon, madam, for running into this subject. The truth is, I was lately thinking to write upon it; but I shall not have leisure these many months.

Take no farther concern about your dwarf. The person whom you honour with your notice, I shall always think it my duty to care for. I have let it be known in the town what you have done for him; which, I hope, will be a spur to the generosity of others. He has paid me but one visit as yet. His wants are few; and he seems to be modest as well as magnanimous. Both virtues certainly entitle him to consideration.

I have not yet seen the verses on Shakespeare and the dove. One thing I am certain of, which is, that they will contain nothing so much to the purpose, or so elegant, as what you have said on the occasion, in prose. You justly remark, that any bird of character, from the eagle to the sky-lark, from the owl to the mock-bird, might symbolise with one or other of the attributes of that universal genius. But do not you think, that his dove-like qualities are among those on which he *now* reflects with peculiar complacency? And I think it could be shown, from many things in his writings, that he resembled the dove, as much as the eagle. There are no surly fellows among his favourite characters: and he seems to excel himself in the delineation of a good-natured one. Witness his Brutus, who is indeed finished *con amore*; and who, in gentleness of nature, exceeds even the Brutus of the good-natured Plutarch, as this last exceeded, by many degrees, (if we are to believe some creditable historians) the true original Brutus, who fell at Philippi. There are besides, in the writings of Shakespeare, innumerable passages that bespeak a mind peculiarly attentive to the rights of humanity, and to the feelings of animal nature. Lear, when his distress is at the highest, sympathises with those, who, amidst the pinchings of want and nakedness, are exposed to the tempestuous elements. I need not put you in mind of the *poor sequestered stag* in "As you like it;" nor need I say more on a subject, with which you are much better acquainted than I am.

LETTER CXVIII.

Dr. Beattie to the Honourable Mr. Baron Gordon.

Aberdeen, 6th February, 1776.

I have been very much employed in preparing some little things of mine for the press; otherwise I should sooner have acknowledged the favour of your most obliging letter.

The last time I read Virgil, I took it into my head, that the tenth and eleventh books of the Æneid were not so highly finished as the rest. Every body knows, that the last six books are less perfect than the first six; and I fancied that some of the last six came nearer to perfection than others. I cannot now recollect my reasons for this conceit; but I propose to read the Æneid again, as soon as I have got rid of this publication; and I hope I shall then be in a condition to give something of a reasonable

ble answer to any question you may do me the honour to propose in regard to that matter.

I do not mean, that the tenth or eleventh books are at all imperfect; I only mean, that they fall short of Virgilian perfection. And many passages there are in both, which Virgil himself could not, in my opinion, have made better. Such are the story of Mezentius and Lausus, in the end of the tenth book; and that passage in the eleventh, where old Evander meets the dead body of his son. Mezentius is a character of Virgil's own contrivance, and it is extremely well-drawn: an old tyrant, hated by his people, on account of his impiety and cruelty, yet graced with one amiable virtue, which is sometimes found in very rugged minds, a tender affection for a most deserving son. Filial affection is one of those virtues which Virgil dwells upon with peculiar pleasure; he never omits any opportunity of bringing it in, and he always paints it in the most lovely colours. Æneas, Ascanius, Euryalus, Lausus, are all eminent for this virtue; and Turnus, when he asks his life, asks it only for the sake of his poor old father. Let a young man read the Æneid with taste and attention, and then be an undutiful child if he can. I think there is nothing very distinguishing in Camilla. Perhaps it is not easy to imagine more than one form of that character. The adventures of her early youth, are, however, highly interesting, and wildly romantic. The circumstance of her being, when an infant, thrown across a river, tied to a javelin, is so very singular, that I should suppose Virgil had found it in some history; and, if I mistake not, Plutarch has told such a story of King Pyrrhus. The battle of the horse, in the end of the eleventh book, is well conducted, considering that Virgil was there left to his shifts, and had not Homer to assist him. The speeches of Drances and Turnus are highly animated; and nothing could be better contrived to raise our idea of Æneas, than the answer which Diomede gives to the ambassadors from the Italian army.

I ought to ask pardon for troubling you with these superficial remarks. But a desire to approve myself worthy of being honoured with your commands, has led me into a subject, for which I am not at present prepared. When I have the pleasure to pay my respects to you at Cluny, which, I hope, will be early in the summer, I shall be glad to talk over these matters, and to correct my opinions by yours.

LETTER CXIX.

Dr. Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Aberdeen, 10th January, 1779.

Major Mercer made me very happy with the news he brought from Gordon-Castle, particularly when he assured me that your Grace was in perfect health. He told me too, that your solitude was at an end for some time; which, I confess, I was not sorry to hear. Seasons of recollection may be useful; but when one begins to find pleasure in sighing over Young's "Night Thoughts" in a corner, it is time to shut the book, and return to the company. I grant, that, while the mind is in a certain state, those gloomy ideas give exquisite delight; but their effect resembles that of intoxication upon the body; they may produce a temporary fit of feverish exultation, but qualms, and weakened nerves, and depression of spirits, are the consequence. I have great respect for Dr. Young, both as a man and as a poet; I used to devour his "Night Thoughts" with a satisfaction not unlike that which, in my younger years, I have found in walking alone in a church-yard, or in a wild mountain, by the light of the moon, at midnight. Such things may help to soften a rugged mind; and I believe I might have been the better for them. But your Grace's heart is already "too feelingly alive to each fine impulse;" and, therefore, to you I would recommend gay thoughts, cheerful books, and sprightly company: I might have said *company* without any limitation, for wherever you are, the company must be sprightly. Excuse this obtrusion of advice. We are all physicians who have arrived at forty; and as I have been studying the anatomy of the human mind these fifteen years and upwards, I think I ought to be something of a soul-doctor by this time.

When I first read Young, my heart was broken to think of the poor man's afflictions. Afterwards, I took it in my head, that

that where there was so much lamentation there could not be excessive suffering; and I could not help applying to him sometimes those lines of a song,

> "Believe me, the shepherd but feigns;
> "He's wretched, to show he has wit."

On talking with some of Dr. Young's particular friends in England, I have since found that my conjecture was right; for that, while he was composing the "Night Thoughts," he was really as cheerful as any other man.

I well know the effect of what your Grace expresses so properly, of a cold *yes* returned to a warm sentiment. One meets with it often in company; and, in most companies, with nothing else. And yet it is perhaps no great loss, upon the whole, that one's enthusiasm does not always meet with an adequate return. A disappointment of this sort, now and then, may have upon the mind an effect something like that of the cold bath upon the body; it gives a temporary shock, but is followed by a very delightful glow as soon as one gets into a society of the right temperature. They resemble too in another respect. A cool companion may be disagreeable at first, but in a little time he becomes less so; and at our first plunge we are impatient to get out of the bath, but if we stay in it a minute or two, we lose the sense of its extreme coldness. Would not your Grace think, from what I am saying, or rather preaching, that I was the most social man upon earth? And yet I am become almost an hermit: I have not made four visits these four months. Not that I am running away, or have any design to run away, from the world. It is, I rather think, the world that is running away from me.

No character was ever more fully, or more concisely drawn, than that of Major Mercer by your Grace. I was certain you would like him the more, the longer you knew him. With more learning than any other man of my acquaintance, he has all the playfulness of a school-boy; and unites the wit and the wisdom of Montesquieu, with the sensibility of Rousseau, and the generosity of Tom Jones. Your Grace has likewise a very just idea of Mrs. Mercer. She is most amiable, and well accomplished; and, in goodness and generosity of nature, is not inferior even to the Major himself. I met her the other day, and was happy to find her in better health than I think she has been for some years. This will be most welcome news to the Major. Pray, does your Grace think that he blames me for not writing to him this great while? The true reason is, that I have not had this great while any news to send him, but what I knew would give him pain; and therefore I thought it better not to write, especially as we have been in daily expectation of seeing him here these several weeks. Will your Grace take the trouble to tell him this? There is no man to whom I have been so much obliged; and, with one or two exceptions, there is no man or woman whom I love so well.

LETTER CXX.

The same to the same.

Aberdeen, 5th July, 1797.

I NOW sit down to make good the threatening denounced in the conclusion of a letter, which I had the honour to write to your Grace about ten days ago. The request I am going to make I should preface with many apologies, if I did not know, that the personage to whom I address myself is too well acquainted with all the good emotions of the human heart, to blame the warmth of a school-boy attachment, and too generous to think the worse of me for wishing to assist an unfortunate friend.

Three weeks ago, as I was scribbling in my garret, a man entered, whom at first I did not know; but, on his desiring me to look him in the face, I soon recollected an old friend, whom I had not seen, and scarcely heard of, these twenty years. He and I lodged in the same house, when we attended the school of Laurencekirk, in the year 1747. I was then about ten years old, and he about fifteen. As he took a great liking to me, he had many opportunities of obliging me; having much more knowledge of the world, as well as more bodily strength, than I. He was, besides, an ingenious mechanic, and made for me many little things: and it must not be forgotten, that he first put a violin in my hands, and gave me the only lessons in music I ever received. Four years after this

this period, I went to college, and he engaged in farming. But our acquaintance was renewed about five years after, when I remember he made me the confident of a passion he had for the greatest beauty in that part of the country, whom he soon after married.

I was very glad to see my old friend so unexpectedly; and we talked over many old stories, which, though interesting to us, would have given little pleasure to any body else. But my satisfaction was soon changed to regret, when, upon inquiring into the particulars of his fortune during these twenty years, I found he had been very unsuccessful. His farming projects had miscarried; and, happening to give some offence to a young woman, who was called the housekeeper of a gentleman on whom he depended, she swore she would be revenged, to his ruin; and was as good as her word. He satisfied his creditors, by giving them all his substance; and, retiring to a small house in Johnshaven *, made a shift to support his family by working as a joiner; a trade which, when a boy, he had picked up for his amusement. But a consumptive complaint overtook him; and though he got the better of it, he has never since been able to do any thing that requires labour, and can now only make fiddles, and some such little matters, for which there is no great demand in the place where he lives. He told me, he had come to Aberdeen on purpose to put me in mind of our old acquaintance, and see whether I could do any thing for him. I asked, in what respect he wished me to serve him. He would do any thing, he said, for his family, that was not dishonourable: and, on pressing him a little further, I found, that the height of his ambition was to be a tide-waiter, a land-waiter, or an officer of excise. I told him, it was particularly unlucky, that I had not the least influence, or even acquaintance, with any one commissioner, either of the excise or customs: but, as I did not care to discourage him, I promised to think of his case, and to do what I could. I have since seen a clergyman, who knows my friend very well, and describes his condition as still more forlorn than he had represented it.

It is in behalf of this poor man, that I now venture to implore your Grace's advice and assistance. I am well aware, that, though his case is very interesting to me, there is nothing extraordinary in it; and that your Grace must often be solicited for others in like circumstances. It is, therefore, with the utmost reluctance, that I have taken this liberty. If your Grace thinks, that an application from me to Mr. Baron Gordon might be sufficient to procure one of the offices in question for my friend, I would not wish you to have any trouble; but if my application were enforced by yours, it would have a better chance to succeed. This, however, I do not request, if it is not so easy to your Grace, as to be almost a matter of indifference.

By the first convenient opportunity I hope to send your Grace a sort of curiosity, — four elegant Pastorals, by a Quaker;—not one of our Quakers of Scotland, but a true English Quaker, who says *thee* and *thou*, and comes into a room, and sits down in company, without taking off his hat. For all this, he is a very worthy man, an elegant scholar, a cheerful companion, and a particular friend of mine. His name is John Scott of Amwell, near Ware, Hertfordshire, where he lives in an elegant retirement, (for his fortune is very good); and has dug in a chalk-hill, near his house, one of the most curious grottos I have ever seen. As it is only twenty miles from London, I would recommend it to your Grace, when you are there, as worth going to visit. Your Grace will be pleased with his Pastorals, not only on account of their morality and sweet versification, but also for their images and descriptions, which are a very exact picture of the groves, woods, waters, and windmills, of that part of England where he resides.

* A small fishing town in the county of Kincardine.

LETTER CXXI.

The same to the same.

Whitehall, 16th May, 1781.

I HAVE seen most of the fashionable curiosities; but will not trouble your Grace with any particular account of them. The exhibition of pictures at the Royal Academy is the best of the kind I have seen. The best pieces, in my opinion, are, Thais (with a torch in her hand); the Death of Dido; and a Boy supposed to be listening to a wonderful story; these three by Sir Joshua Reynolds: a Shepherd-boy, by Gainsborough: some landscapes, by Barrett. Christ healing the Sick, by West, is a prodigious great work, and has in it great variety of expression; but there is a glare and a hardness in the colouring, which makes it look more like a picture than like nature. Gainsborough's picture of the King is the strongest likeness I have ever seen; his Queen too is very well: but he has not given them attitudes becoming their rank; the King has his hat in his hand, and the Queen looks as if she were going to curtsey in the beginning of a minuet. Others may think differently: I give my own opinion.

There is nothing at either playhouse that is in the least captivating: nor, I think, one player, Mrs. Abingdon excepted, whom one would wish to see a second time. I was shocked at Leoni, in "Had I a heart for falsehood," &c. A man singing with a woman's voice, sounds as unnatural to me, as a woman singing with a man's. Either may do in a private company, where it is enough if people are diverted; but on a stage, where nature ought to be imitated, both are in my opinion intolerable.

Johnson's new "Lives" are published. He is, as your Grace heard he would be, very severe on my poor friend, Gray. His life of Pope is excellent; and in all his lives there is merit, as they contain a great variety of sound criticism and pleasing information. He has not done justice to Lord Lyttelton. He has found means to pay me a very great compliment, for which I am much obliged to him, in speaking of Mr. Gray's journey into Scotland in 1765.

Copley's picture of Lord Chatham's Death is an exhibition of itself. It is a vast collection of portraits, some of them very like: but, excepting three or four of the personages present, few of this vast assembly seem to be much affected with the great event; which divests the picture of its unity, and will in the next age make it cease to be interesting.

LETTER CXXII.

Dr. Beattie to Sir William Forbes.

Hunton, near Maidstone, Kent, 14th July, 1784.

I AM now, my dear Sir, arrived at a place, where external nature wears a face of the most profound tranquillity; and sit down to thank you for your two last letters, which came to hand the day before I left the town. It is so far fortunate, that Mrs. B.'s removal to Musselburgh was attended with so little inconvenience. My confidence in your friendship and goodness entirely satisfies me, that you will soon put matters on a right footing. I lament, indeed, that your attention to me and mine should give you so much trouble; but the consciousness of doing good to the unfortunate and forlorn will in part reward you; and no mind ever possessed that consciousness in a more exquisite degree than yours has reason to do.

The hot weather made London so disagreeable, that I was obliged to leave it before I had seen all my friends: I must make a longer stay when I return thither. I wish I had time and capacity to give you a description of this parsonage. It is delightfully situated about half-way down a hill fronting the south, about a mile from Coxheath. My windows command a prospect, extending southward about twelve miles, and from east to west not less, I suppose, than forty. In this whole space I do not see a single speck of ground that is not in the highest degree cultivated; for Coxheath is not in sight. The lawns in the neighbourhood, the hop-grounds, the rich verdure of the trees, and their endless variety, form a scenery so picturesque and so luxuriant, that it is not easy to fancy any thing finer. Add to this the cottages, churches, and villages, rising here and there among the

the trees, and scattered over the whole country; clumps of oaks, and other lofty trees, disposed in ten thousand different forms, and some of them visible in the horizon at the distance of more than ten miles; and you will have some idea of the beauty of Hunton. The only thing wanting is the murmur of running water; but we have some ponds and clear pools that glitter through the trees, and have a very pleasing effect. With abundance of shade, we have no damp nor fenny ground: and though the country looks at a distance like one continued grove, the trees do not press upon us: indeed I do not at present see one that I could wish removed. There is no road within sight, the hedges that overhang the highways being very high; so that we see neither travellers nor carriages, and indeed hardly any thing in motion; which conveys such an idea of peace and quiet, as I think I never was conscious of before; and forms a most striking contrast with the endless noise and restless multitudes of Piccadilly.

But what pleases me most at Hunton is not now in view; for my friend, the Bishop of Chester, is gone out a riding. You are no stranger to the character of this amiable man. Mrs. Porteus is not less amiable. Their house is the mansion of peace, piety, and cheerfulness. The Bishop has improved his parsonage and the grounds about it as much as they can be improved, and made it one of the pleasantest spots in England. The whole is bounded by a winding gravel walk, about half-a-mile in circumference. Close by, lives a most agreeable lady, with whom we all breakfasted to-day. She is the widow of Sir Roger Twisden; and, though not more than five-and-twenty, lives in this elegant retirement, and employs herself chiefly in the education of her daughter, a fine child of four years of age, who is mistress of her catechism, and reads wonderfully well. I expect soon to see our friend Mr. Langton, as the Bishop proposes to send him an invitation, Rochester being only ten miles off. Tunbridge wells is fifteen miles the other way.

FROM THE LETTERS OF SIR WILLIAM JONES.

LETTER CXXIII.

Mr. Jones, at the Age of Fourteen, to his Sister.

Dear Sister,

WHEN I received your letter, I was very concerned to hear the death of your friend Mr. Reynolds, which I consider as a piece of affliction common to us both. For although my knowledge of his name or character is of no long date, and though I never had any personal acquaintance with him, yet (as you observe) we ought to regret the loss of every honourable man; and if I had the pleasure of your conversation, I would certainly give you any consolatory advice that lay in my power, and make it my business to convince you what a real share I take in your chagrin. And yet to reason philosophically, I cannot help thinking any grief upon a person's death very superfluous, and inconsistent with sense; for what is the cause of our sorrow? Is it because we hate the person deceased? that were to imply strange contradiction, to express our joy by the common signs of sorrow. If, on the other hand, we grieve for one who was dear to us, I should reply that we should, on the contrary, rejoice at his having left a state so perilous and uncertain as life is. The common strain is; "'Tis "pity so virtuous a man should die:"—but I assert the contrary; and when I hear the death of a person of merit, I cannot help reflecting, how happy he must be who now takes the reward of his excellencies, without the possibility of falling away from them and losing the virtue which he professed, on whose character death has fixed a kind of seal, and placed him out of the reach of vice and infamy! for death only closes a man's reputation, and determines it as either good or bad. On the contrary, in life nothing is certain; whilst any one is liable to alteration, we may possibly be forced to retract our esteem for him, and some time or other he may appear to us, as under a different light than what he does at present; for the life of no man can be pronounced either happy or miserable, virtuous or abandoned, before the conclusion of it. It was up-

on this reflection, that Solon, being asked by Crœsus, a monarch of immense riches, who was the happiest man? answered, After your death I shall be able to determine. Besides, though a man should pursue a constant and determinate course of virtue, though he were to keep a regular symmetry and uniformity in his actions, and preserve the beauty of his reputation to the last, yet (while he lives) his very virtue may incur some evil imputation, and provoke a thousand murmurs of detraction; for, believe me, my dear sister, there is no instance of any virtue, or social excellence, which has not excited the envy of innumerable assailants, whose acrimony is raised barely by seeing others pleased, and by hearing commendation which another enjoys. It is not easy in this life for any man to escape censure; and infamy requires very little labour to assist its circulation. But there is a kind of sanction in the characters of the dead, which gives due force and reward to their merits, and defends them from the suggestions of calumny. But to return to the point; what reason is there to disturb yourself on this melancholy occasion? do but reflect that thousands die every moment of time, that even while we speak, some unhappy wretch or other is either pining with hunger, or pinched with poverty, sometimes giving up his life to the point of the sword, torn with convulsive agonies, and undergoing many miseries which it were superfluous to mention. We should therefore compare our afflictions with those who are more miserable, and not with those who are more happy. I am ashamed to add more, lest I should seem to mistrust your prudence; but next week, when I understand your mind is more composed, I shall write you word how all things go here. I designed to write you this letter in French, but I thought I could express my thoughts with more energy, in my own language.

I come now, after a long interval, to mention some more private circumstances. Pray give my duty to my Mamma, and thank her for my shirts. They fit, in my opinion, very well; though Biddy says they are too little in the arms. You may expect a letter from me every day in the week till I come home; for Mrs. Biscoe has desired it, and has given me some franks. When you see her, you may tell her that her little boy sends his duty to her, and Mr. Biscoe his love to his sister, and desires to be remembered to Miss Cleeve: he also sends his compliments to my Mamma and you. Upon my word I never thought our bleak air would have so good an effect upon him. His complexion is now ruddy, which before was sallow and pale, and he is indeed much grown: but I now speak of trifles, I mean in comparison of his learning; and indeed he takes that with wonderful acuteness; besides, his excessive high spirits increase mine, and give me comfort, since, after Parnell's departure, he is almost the only company I keep. As for news; the only article I know is, that Mrs. Par is dead and buried. Mr. and Mrs. Sumner are well: the latter thanks you for bringing the letter from your old acquaintance, and the former has made me an elegant present. I am now very much taken up with study; am to speak Antony's speech in Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar (which play I will read to you when I come to town), and am this week to make a declamation. I add no more than the sincere well-wishes of your faithful friend, &c.

LETTER CXXIV.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

September 7, 1769.

THE necessary trouble of correcting the first printed sheets of my history, prevented me to-day from paying a proper respect to the memory of Shakespeare, by attending his jubilee. But I was resolved to do all the honour in my power to as great a poet, and set out in the morning, in company with a friend, to visit a place where Milton spent some part of his life, and where, in all probability, he composed several of his earliest productions. It is a small village situated on a pleasant hill, about three miles from Oxford, and called Forest Hill, because it formerly lay contiguous to a forest, which has since been cut down. The poet chose this place of retirement after his first marriage, and he describes the beauties of his retreat in that fine passage of his L'Allegro:

Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
* * * * * *

While

While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe;
And every shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whose the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees.

* * * * * *

Hard by, a cottage chimney smoaks,
From betwixt two aged oaks. &c.

It was neither the proper season of the year, nor time of the day, to hear all the rural sounds, and see all the objects mentioned in this description; but, by a pleasing concurrence of circumstances, we were saluted, on our approach to the village, with the music of the mower and his scythe; we saw the ploughman intent upon his labour, and the milk-maid returning from her country employment.

As we ascended the hill, the variety of beautiful objects, the agreeable stillness and natural simplicity of the whole scene, gave us the highest pleasure. We at length reached the spot, whence Milton undoubtedly took most of his images; it is on the top of the hill, from which there is a most extensive prospect on all sides: the distant mountains that seemed to support the clouds, the villages and turrets, partly shaded with trees of the finest verdure, and partly raised above the groves that surrounded them, the dark plains and meadows of a greyish colour, where the sheep were feeding at large, in short, the view of the streams and rivers, convinced us that there was not a single useless or idle word in the above-mentioned description, but that it was a most exact and lively representation of nature. Thus will this fine passage, which has always been admired for its elegance, receive an additional beauty from its exactness. After we had walked, with a kind of poetical enthusiasm over this enchanted ground, we returned to the village.

The poet's house was close to the church, the greatest part of it has been pulled down, and what remains, belongs to an adjacent farm. I am informed that several papers in Milton's own hand, were found by the gentleman who was last in possession of the estate. The tradition of his having lived there is current among the villagers: one of them shewed us a ruinous wall that made part of his chamber; and I was much pleased with another, who had forgotten the name of Milton, but recollected him by the title of The Poet.

It must not be omitted, that the groves near this village are famous for nightingales, which are so elegantly described in the Pensieroso. Most of the cottage windows are overgrown with sweet briars, vines, and honey-suckles; and that Milton's habitation had the same rustic ornament, we may conclude from his description of the lark bidding him good-morrow,

Thro' the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:

for it is evident, that he meant a sort of honey-suckle by the eglantine; though that word is commonly used for the sweet-briar, which he could not mention twice in the same couplet.

If I ever pass a month or six weeks at Oxford in the summer, I shall be inclined to hire and repair this venerable mansion, and to make a festival for a circle of friends, in honour of Milton, the most perfect scholar, as well as the sublimest poet, that our country ever produced. Such an honour will be less splendid, but more sincere and respectful, than all the pomp and ceremony on the banks of the Avon. I have, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

Mr. Jones to N. B. Halhed.

Nice, March 1, 1770.

I RECEIVED your short letter with great pleasure, as it convinced me, that you were not insensible of my esteem for you, and such as resemble you. I wrote immediately to my friends, as you desired, most earnestly requesting them to promote your views, as if my own interest were concerned; if they accede to my wishes in this respect, they will oblige me and themselves too; for doubtless I shall be ready to make them every return that I can. I think however that I shall have it in my power to serve you more

effectually, after my return to England; and I beg you to believe, that no inclination or efforts on my part shall ever be wanting to promote your wishes.

My health is good; but I long for those enjoyments, of which I know not well how to bear the privation. When I first arrived here, I was delighted with a variety of objects, rarely, if ever, seen in my own country,—olives, myrtles, pomegranates, palms, vineyards, aromatic plants, and a surprising variety of the sweetest flowers, blooming in the midst of winter. But the attraction of novelty has ceased; I am now satiated, and begin to feel somewhat of disgust. The windows of our inn are scarcely thirty paces from the sea, and, as Ovid beautifully says—

Tired, on the uniform expanse I gaze.

I have therefore no other resource than, with Cicero, to count the waves; or, with Archimedes and Archytas, to measure the sands. I cannot describe to you how weary I am of this place, nor my anxiety to be again at Oxford, where I might jest with you, or philosophize with Poore. If it be not inconvenient, I wish you would write to me often, for I long to know how you and our friends are: but write if you please in Latin, and with gaiety, for it grieves me to observe the uneasiness under which you appear to labour. Let me ever retain a place in your affection, as you do in mine; continue to cultivate polite literature; woo the muses; reverence philosophy; and give your days and nights to composition, with a due regard however to the preservation of your health.

LETTER CXXVI.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Nice, April 14, 1770.

It is with great pleasure that I acquaint your Ladyship, that Mrs. Poyntz, Lady Harriet, and her brother, are perfectly well; Mrs. Poyntz goes this morning to Villa Franca; I am to be her knight, and am just equipped to mount my Rosinantè; Mademoiselle Annette is to go upon Lady Mary Somerset's ass; so we shall make a formidable procession. It is a delightful morning, and I hope Mrs. Poyntz will be pleased with her jaunt. We have had very bad weather, violent rains, and storms of thunder in the night, a close sultry heat all day, and a very sharp cold every evening; but the spring seems now to be pretty well settled; and I fancy we shall have a continually clear sky, and a mild air, as long as we stay. We all promise ourselves great pleasure in our journey homewards; and we have great reason to believe it will be enchantingly pleasant. I have every day more and more reason to be pleased with the unfolding of my pupil's disposition: your Ladyship will perhaps think these to be words of course, and what you might naturally expect from any other person in my situation; but, believe me, I say them upon no other motive than their truth; for if it were my nature to speak to any one what I do not think, I should at least speak truly to your Ladyship, of whom I am, with the greatest truth, &c.

LETTER CXXVII.

The same to the same.

Paris, June 4, 1770.

Your ladyship will be surprised at receiving such a parcel of papers from me; but I am willing to make amends for not writing all last month. The truth is, I had nothing particular to say at that time; but on my arrival at Paris, I found a letter from my friend Reviczki, with a very spirited ode composed by him upon the marriage of the archduchess. I dare say Lord Spencer will like it, and I therefore take the liberty to inclose it for him. I have marked in this manner ⊖ two or three passages that are faulty; and I have put this sign ⌒ to one stanza that I do not quite understand. I have also sent with it the Baron's letter to me, which will serve as a comment upon many parts of the ode. You will have heard of the shocking accidents that happened here the night of the fire-works. Above one hundred and thirty people were killed; and several people of fashion were crushed to death in their carriages. We had the good fortune to arrive here two days after this dreadful catastrophe; which perhaps has saved some

of us, if not from real danger, at least from the apprehension of it. We shall not be sorry to see England again, and hope to have that pleasure very soon. Soon after my return, I think of going to Oxford for a short time: but if Lord Althorpe goes back to school this summer, as I sincerely hope he will, I shall not go to College till August; for I am convinced that a public school has already been, and will continue to be, of the highest advantage to him in every respect. While Mrs. Poyntz staid at Lyons, I made an excursion to Geneva, in hopes of seeing Voltaire, but was disappointed. I sent him a note with a few verses, implying that the muse of tragedy had left her ancient seat in Greece and Italy, and had fixed her abode on the borders of a lake, &c. He returned this answer: "The worst of French poets and "philosophers is almost dying; age and "sickness have brought him to his last "day; he can converse with nobody, and "entreats Mr. Jones to excuse and pity "him. He presents him with his hum-"ble respects." But he was not so ill as he imagined; for he had been walking in his court, and went into his house just as I came to it. The servants shewed me somebody at a window, who they said was he; but I had scarce a glimpse of him. I am inclined to think that Voltaire begins to be rather serious, when he finds himself upon the brink of eternity; and that he refuses to see company, because he cannot display his former wit and sprightliness. I find my book * is published; I am not at all solicitous about its success: as I did not choose the subject myself, I am not answerable for the wild extravagance of the style, nor for the faults of the original; but if your Ladyship takes the trouble to read the dissertation at the end, you may perhaps find some new and pleasing images. The work has one advantage, it is certainly authentic. Lady Georgiana is so good as to enquire how Soliman goes on; pray tell her he is in great affliction, as he begins to suspect the innocence of Mustafa, who is just slain. To be serious; my tragedy is just finished; and I hope to shew it to your Ladyship in a hort time. I am, &c.

* Translation of the Life of Nadir Shah.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Mr. Jones to C. Reviczki.

March, 1771.

A PLAGUE on our men in office, who for six months have amused me with idle promises, which I see no prospect of their fulfilling, that they would forward my books and a letter to you! They say, that they have not yet had an opportunity; and that the apprehension of a Spanish war (which is now no more) furnishes them with incessant occupation. I have however so much to say to you, that I can no longer delay writing; I wish indeed I could communicate it in person. On my late return to England, I found myself entangled, as it were, in a variety of important considerations. My friends, companions, relations, all attacked me with urgent solicitations to banish poetry and Oriental literature for a time, and apply myself to oratory and the study of the law; in other words, to become a barrister, and pursue the track of ambition. Their advice in truth was conformable to my own inclinations; for the only road to the highest stations in this country is that of the law; and I need not add, how ambitious and laborious I am. Behold me then become a lawyer, and expect in future, that my correspondence will have somewhat more of public business in it. But if it ever should be my fortune to have any share in administration, you shall be my Atticus, the partner of my plans, the confidant of my secrets. Do not however suppose, that I have altogether renounced polite literature. I intend shortly to publish my English poems, and I mean to bring my tragedy of Soliman on the stage, when I can find proper actors for the performance of it. I intend also composing an epic poem, on a noble subject, under the title of Britanneis: but this I must defer until I have more leisure, with some degree of independence. In the mean time, I amuse myself with the choicest of the Persian poets; and I have the good fortune to possess many manuscripts, which I have either purchased or borrowed from my friends, on various subjects, including history, philosophy, and some of the most celebrated poetry of Persia.

I am highly delighted with Jami's poem of Yusef and Zuleika; it contains somewhat more than four thousand couplets, each of which is a star of the first brilliance. We have six copies of this work at Oxford, one of which is correct; it has the vowel points, and is illustrated with the notes of Golius. I also possess a copy, which as soon as I have leisure, I will print. Let me ask in the mean time how you are employed? Do you continue your occupation of elucidating your favourite Hafez? I will most willingly give all the assistance in my power to the publication of your work, if you will have it printed in London; but I scarcely think that any printer will undertake it at his own expense, unless the poems are accompanied with an English or French translation, for you cannot conceive how few English gentlemen understand Latin. Let me recommend to you therefore to give a literal version of Hafez in French, with annotations in the same language; and this I think will be more acceptable even to your own countrymen, than a Latin translation; though indeed you may annex to your work such odes as you have translated into that language. The new edition of Meninski goes on tolerably well. I inclose a specimen of the new Arabic types, and earnestly beg your opinion upon them, that any defects may be corrected as soon as possible. I have had a copper-plate engraving made of one of the odes of Hafez, and may perhaps, when my circumtances afford it, print an edition of Jami's whole poem in the same manner. A work of this kind on silken paper, would I doubt not be very acceptable to the Governor of Bengal, and the other principal persons in India. I cannot conceive what is become of the book which I sent to you, but I will take the first opportunity of transmitting a fairer and more correct copy, together with my little Treatise on the Literature of Asia, and my Grammar of the Persian Language, which is printed with some degree of elegance; and I earnestly entreat you to tell me, if any thing is wrong in it, or any thing omitted, that the next edition may be more perfect. I only wait for leisure to publish my Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry.

Do not however imagine that I despise the usual enjoyments of youth; no one can take more delight in singing and dancing than I do, nor in the moderate use of wine, nor in the exquisite beauty of the ladies, of whom London affords an enchanting variety; but I prefer glory, my supreme delight, to all other gratifications, and I will pursue it through fire and water, by day and by night. Oh! my Charles, (for I renounce all ceremony, and address you with ancient simplicity) what a boundless scene opens to my view! if I had two lives, I should scarcely find time for the due execution of all the public and private projects which I have in mind!

LETTER CXXIX.

Mr. Jones to J. Wilmot, Esq.

Univ. Coll. Oxford, 3d of June, 1771.

My dear Wilmot,

It makes me very happy to hear that my Lord Chief Justice does not retire on account of ill health, but from a motive which does him the highest honour. He will now enjoy the greatest happiness of human life, ease with dignity, after having passed through the most honourable labour without danger. I should think myself highly blessed, if I could pursue a similar course in my small sphere, and after having raised a competency at the bar, could retire to the bowers of learning and the arts.

I have just begun to contemplate the stately edifice of the laws of England,—

"The gather'd wisdom of a thousand years,"—

if you will allow me to parody a line of Pope. I do not see why the study of the law is called dry and unpleasant; and I very much suspect that it seems so to those only, who would think any study unpleasant, which required a great application of the mind, and exertion of the memory. I have read most attentively the two first volumes of Blackstone's Commentaries, and the two others will require much less attention. I am much pleased with the care he takes to quote his authorities in the margin, which not only give a sanction to what he asserts, but point out the sources to which the student may apply for more diffusive knowledge. I have opened two common-place books, the one of the law, the other of oratory, which is surely too much

much neglected by our modern speakers. I do not mean the popular eloquence, which cannot be tolerated at the bar, but that correctness of style, and elegance of method, which at once pleases and persuades the hearer. But I must lay aside my studies for about six weeks, while I am printing my Grammar, from which a good deal is expected; and which I must endeavour to make as perfect as a human work can be. When that is finished, I shall attend the Court of King's Bench very constantly, and shall either take a lodging in Westminster, or accept the invitation of a friend, in Duke Street, who has made me an obliging offer of apartments.

I am sorry the characters you sent me are not Persian but Chinese, which I cannot decipher without a book, which I have not at present, but tous Chinois qu'ils sont, I shall be able to make them out, when the weather will permit me to sit in the Bodleian. In the mean time, I would advise you to enquire after a native of China, who is now in London; I cannot recollect where he lodges, but shall know when I come to town, which will be to-morrow or Saturday. I shall be at Richardson's till my Grammar is finished, unless I can buy a set of chambers in the Temple, which I fear will be difficult. I will certainly call upon you in a day or two. On one of the Indian pictures at your house, there was a beautiful copy of Persian verses, which I will beg leave to transcribe, and should be glad to print it, with a translation, in the Appendix to my Grammar. I have not yet had my Persian proposals engraved, but when you write to your brother, you would much oblige me by desiring him to send me a little Persian manuscript, if he can procure it without much trouble. It is a small poem which I intend to print; we have six or seven copies of it at Oxford, but if I had one in my possession, it would save me the trouble of transcribing it. I have inclosed its title in Persian and English. I am very glad that your family are well. I wish them joy upon every occasion; my mother and sister desire their compliments to you, and I am, with great regard, yours, &c.

LETTER CXXX.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Hawkins.

November 5, 1771.

I SHALL ever gratefully acknowledge, dear Sir, my obligations to you for the trouble you take in inspecting my trifles. Had Dryden and other poets met with such a friend, their poems would have been more polished, and consequently more fit to see the light. Your observations are so judicious, that I wish you had not been so sparing of them. I entirely approve of all your corrections, &c.

As to the years in which the poems were written, they are certainly of no consequence to the public; but (unless it be very absurd) I would wish to specify them, for it would hurt me as a student at the bar, to have it thought that I continue to apply myself to poetry; and I mean to insinuate that I have given it up for several years, which I must explain more fully in the preface. For a man who wishes to rise in the law, must be supposed to have no other object.

LETTER CXXXI.

Dr. Hunt to Mr. Jones.

Ch. Church, March 2, 1774.

Dear Sir,

I RETURN you my hearty thanks for your most acceptable present of your excellent book on the Asiatic poetry. I should have made you my acknowledgements for this great favour before, but I have been so entirely engaged in reading the book (which I have done from the beginning to the end) that I have not had time to think of its worthy author any otherwise, than by tacitly admiring, as I went along, his exquisitely fine parts, and wonderful learning. Indeed, so engaging is the beautiful style of this admirable performance, and so striking the observations it contains, that it is next to impossible for a person, who has any taste for this branch of literature, when he has once taken it into his hand, to lay it aside again without giving it a thorough perusal. I find you have enriched this work with a great variety of curious quotations, and judicious

criticisms, as well as with the addition of several valuable new pieces, since you favoured me with the sight of it before, and the pleasure which I have now had in reading it has been in proportion. I hope this new key to the Asiatic poetry, with which you have obliged the world, will not be suffered to rust for want of use; but that it will prove, what you intended it to be, an happy instrument in the hands of learned and inquisitive men, for unlocking the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge which have been preserved in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persic, and the other Oriental languages; and especially the Hebrew, that venerable channel, through which the sacred compositions of the divinely inspired poets have been conveyed down to us. I hope this will find you well, and am, &c.

P. S. I have seen your proposals for printing the mathematical works of my worthy friend, your late father, and beg to be of the number of your subscribers.

LETTER CXXXII.

Mr. Jones to F. P. Bayer.

Oct. 4, 1774.

I CAN scarcely find words to express my thanks for your obliging present of a most beautiful and splendid copy of Sallust, with an elegant Spanish translation. You have bestowed upon me, a private untitled individual, an honour which heretofore has only been conferred upon great monarchs, and illustrious universities. I really was at a loss to decide, whether I should begin my letter by congratulating you on having so excellent a translator, or by thanking you for this agreeable proof of your remembrance. I look forward to the increasing splendour which the arts and sciences must attain, in a country where the son of the king possesses genius and erudition capable of translating and illustrating with learned notes, the first of the Roman historians; how few youths amongst the nobility in other countries possess the requisite ability or inclination for such a task! The history of Sallust is a performance of great depth, wisdom, and dignity: to understand it well, is no small praise; to explain it properly, is still more commendable; but to translate it elegantly, excites admiration. If all this had been accomplished by a private individual, he would have merited applause; if by a youth, he would have had a claim to literary honours; but when to the title of youth, that of prince is added, we cannot too highly extol, or too loudly applaud, his distinguished merit.

Many years are elapsed since I applied myself to the study of your learned language, but I well remember to have read in it with great delight, the heroic poem of Alonzo, the odes of Garcilasso, and the humorous stories of Cervantes: but I most sincerely declare, that I never perused a more elegant or polished composition than the translation of Sallust; and I readily subscribe to the opinion of the learned author in his preface, that the Spanish language approaches very nearly to the dignity of the Latin.

May the accomplished youth continue to deserve well of his country and mankind, and establish his claim to distinction above all the princes of the age! If I may be allowed to offer my sentiments, I would advise him to study most diligently the divine works of Cicero, which no man, in my opinion, ever perused without improving in eloquence and wisdom. The epistle which he wrote to his brother Quintus, on the government of a province, deserves to be daily repeated by every sovereign in the world; his books on offices, on moral ends, and the Tusculan question, merit a hundred perusals; and his orations, nearly sixty in number, deserve to be translated into every European language; nor do I scruple to affirm, that his sixteen books of letters to Atticus, are superior to almost all histories, that of Sallust excepted. With respect to your own compositions, I have read with great attention, and will again read, your most agreeable book. I am informed that you propose giving a Latin translation of it, and I hope you will do it for the benefit of foreigners. I see nothing in it which requires alteration,—nothing which is not entitled to praise. I much wish that you would publish more of your treatises on the antiquities of Asia and Africa. I am confident they would be most acceptable to such as study those subjects. I have only for the present to conclude, by bidding you farewell in my own name, and that of the republic of letters.—Farewell.

LETTER

LETTER CXXXIII.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

My dear Lord, Bath, Dec. 28, 1777.

I TOLD you, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in London, that it was doubtful whether I should pass my vacation at Amsterdam or at Bath; the naiads of the hot springs have prevailed, you see, over the nymphs of the lakes, and I have been drinking the waters for a month, with no less pleasure than advantage to my health; the improvement of which I ascribe, however, in great measure, to my regular exercise on the downs, and to abstinence from any study that requires too much exertion of the mind. I should have scated indeed in Holland from town to town, and a little voyage would have dissipated my bile, if I had any: but that scheme I must postpone till another winter, and have sent an excuse to my Dutch friend who expected me.

As I came hither entirely for the purpose of recreating my exhausted spirits and strengthening my stomach, I have abstained with some reluctance from dancing, an amusement which I am as fond of as ever, but which would be too heating for a water-drinker; and as for the idler diversions of a public place, they have not the recommendation of novelty, without which they cannot long please. You, my dear friend, are in the mean time relaxing yourself, from the severer pursuits of science and civil knowledge, with the healthy and manly exercise of the field, from which you will return with a keener appetite to the noble feast which the Muses are again preparing for you at Cambridge. And here, by way of parenthesis, I must tell you that I joined a small party of hunters the other morning, and was in at the death of a hare; but I must confess that I think hare-hunting a very dull exercise, and fit rather for a huntress than a mighty hunter, rather for Diana than Orion. Had I the taste and vigour of Actæon, without his indiscreet curiosity, my game would be the stag or the fox, and I should leave the hare in peace, without sending her to her many friends. This heresy of mine may arise from my fondness for every thing vast, and my disdain of every thing little; and for the same reason, I should prefer the more violent sport of the Asiatics, who inclose a whole district with toils, and then attack the tigers and leopards with javelins, to the sound of trumpets and clarions. Of music, I conclude, you have as much at Althorpe, as your heart can desire; I might here have more than my ears could bear, or my mind conceive, for we have with us La Motte, Fischer, Rauzzini; but, as I live in the house of my old master, Evans, whom you remember, I am satisfied with his harp, which I prefer to the Theban lyre, as much as I prefer Wales to ancient or modern Egypt.

I was this morning with Wilkes, who shewed me a letter lately written to him from Paris, by Diderot; as I have you know a quick memory, I brought away the substance of it, and give it to you in a translation almost literal:—"Friend "Wilkes, it delights me to hear that you "still have sufficient employment for "your active mind, without which you "cannot long be happy. I have just "read the several speeches which you "have delivered on the subject of your "present war against the provincials; "they are full of eloquence, force, and "dignity. I too have composed a speech "on the same subject, which I would "deliver in your senate, had I a seat in "it.—I will wave for the present, my "countrymen, all considerations of the "justice or injustice of the measures you "are pursuing; I well know that to be "an improper topic at the time when the "public welfare is immediately con-"cerned. I will not even question at "present your power to reduce an ex-"asperated and desperate people; but "consider, I entreat you, that you are "surrounded by nations by whom you "are detested; and say, for Heaven's "sake, how long you will give them rea-"son to laugh at the ridiculous figure "you are making.—This is my ha-"rangue; it is short in words, but exten-"sive in meaning."—So far, my dear Lord, we have no reason to censure the thoughts or expressions of the learned Encyclopedist; what follows is so profligate, that I would not transcribe it, if I were not sure that you would join with me in condemning it. "As to yourself, "(he adds,) be cheerful, drink the best "wines, keep the gayest company, and "should you be inclined to a tender pas-"sion, address yourself to such women

as

"as make the least resistance; they are "as amusing and as interesting as "others. One lives with them without "anxiety, and quits them without re-"gret."—I want words, Diderot, to express the baseness, the folly, the brutality of this sentiment. I am no cynic, but as fond as any man at Paris of cheerful company, and of such pleasures as a man of virtue need not blush to enjoy; but if the philosophy of the French academicians be comprised in your advice to your friend Wilkes, keep it to yourself, and to such as you. I am of a different sect. He concludes his letter with some professions of regard, and with a recommendation of a young Frenchman, who told Wilkes some speeches of Diderot to the Empress of Russia, which you shall hear at some other time. I am interrupted, and must leave you with reluctance till the morning.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Edmund Burke to Mr. Jones.

My dear Sir, March 12, 1779.

I GIVE you many thanks for your most obliging and valuable present, and feel myself extremely honoured by this mark of your friendship. My first leisure will be employed in an attentive perusal of an author, who had merit enough to fill up a part of yours, and whom you have made accessible to me with an ease and advantage, which one so many years disused to Greek literature as I have been, could not otherwise have. Isæus is an author of whom I know nothing but by fame; I am sure that any idea I had from thence conceived of him, will not be at all lessened by seeing him in your translation. I do not know how it has happened, that orators have hitherto fared worse in the hands of the translators, than even the poets; I never could bear to read a translation of Cicero. Demosthenes suffers I think somewhat less;—but he suffers greatly; so much, that I must say, that no English reader could well conceive from whence he had acquired the reputation of the first of orators. I am satisfied that there is now an eminent exception to this rule, and I sincerely congratulate the public on that acquisition. I am, with the greatest truth and regard, my dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXXXV.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Oct. 13, 1778.

MY dear Lord, captain, and friend, (of all which titles no man entertains a juster idea than yourself,) how shall I express the delight which your letter from Warley camp has given me? I cannot sufficiently regret, that I was so long deprived of that pleasure; for, intending to be in London soon after the circuit, I had neglected to leave any directions here about my letters; so that yours has lain almost a month upon my table, where I found it yesterday on my return from the country. I ought indeed to have written first to you, because I was a rambler, you stationary; and because the pen has been my peculiar instrument, as the sword has been yours this summer: but the agitation of forensic business, and the sort of society in which I have been forced to live, afforded me few moments of leisure, except those in which nature calls for perfect repose, and the spirits exhausted with fatigue require immediate reparation. I rejoice to see that you are a votary, as Archilocus says of himself, both of the Muses and of Mars; nor do I believe that a letter full of more manly sentiments, or written with more unaffected elegance, than yours, has often been sent from a camp. You know I have set my mind on your being a fine speaker in next parliament, in the cause of true constitutional liberty, and your letters convince me that I shall not be disappointed. To this great object, both for your own glory and your country's good, your present military station will contribute not a little: for a soldier's life naturally inspires a certain spirit and confidence, without which the finest elocution will not have a full effect. Not to mention Pericles, Xenophon, Cæsar, and a hundred other eloquent soldiers among the ancients; I am persuaded that Pitt (whom by the way I am far from comparing to Pericles) acquired his forcible manner in the field where he carried the colours. This I mention in addition to the advantages of your present situation, which you very justly point out: nor can I think your summer in any respect uselessly spent, since our constitution has a good

defence

defence in a well-regulated militia, officered by men who love their country: and a militia so regulated, may in due time be the means of thinning the formidable standing army, if not of extinguishing it. Captain *** is one of the worthiest, as well as tallest men in the kingdom; but he, and his Socrates, Dr. Johnson, have such prejudices in politics, that one must be upon one's guard in their company, if one wishes to preserve their good opinion. By the way, the Dean of Gloucester has printed a work, which he thinks a full confutation of Locke's Theory of Government; and his second volume will contain a new Theory of his own: of this, when we meet. The disappointment to which you allude, and concerning which you say so many friendly things to me, is not yet certain. My competitor is not yet named; many doubt whether he will be; I think he will not, unless the Chancellor should press it strongly. It is still the opinion and wish of the bar, that I should be the man. I believe the minister hardly knows his own mind. I cannot legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years standing till that time: now many believe that they keep the place open for me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years old; and then I might contribute in some little degree towards the service of my country in parliament, as well as at the bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing; and I might be a speaker in the house of commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age: whereas, in the slow career of Westminster-hall, I should not perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station, till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear lord, that if the minister be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and on that account should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt, or a care of any kind. I will not break in upon you at Warley unexpectedly; but whenever you find it most convenient, let me know, and I will be with you in less than two hours.

LETTER CXXXVI.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Feb. 4, 1780.

THE public piety having given me this afternoon what I rarely can obtain, a short intermission of business, can I employ my leisure more agreeably than in writing to my friend? I shall send my letter at random, not knowing whether you are at Althorpe or at Buckingham, but persuading myself that it will find you without much delay. May I congratulate you and our country on your entrance upon the great career of public life? If there ever was a time when men of spirit, sense, and virtue, ought to stand forth, it is the present. I am informed, that you have attended some county meetings, and are on some committees. Did you find it necessary or convenient to speak on the state of the nation? It is a noble subject, and with your knowledge as well as judgment, you will easily acquire habits of eloquence; but *habits* they are, no less than playing on a musical instrument, or handling a pencil: and as the best musicians and finest painters began with playing sometimes out of tune and drawing out of proportion, so the greatest orators must begin with leaving some periods unfinished, and perhaps with sitting down in the middle of a sentence. It is only by continued use that a speaker learns to express his ideas with precision and soundness, and to provide at the beginning of a period for the conclusion of it: but to this facility of speaking, the habit of writing rapidly contributes in a wonderful degree. I would particularly impress this truth upon your mind, my dear friend, because I am fully convinced that an Englishman's real importance in his country, will always be in a compound ratio of his virtue, his knowledge, and his eloquence; without all of which qualities little real utility can result from either of them apart; and I am no less persuaded, that a virtuous and knowing man, who has no natural impediment, may by habit acquire perfect eloquence, as certainly as a healthy

man

man who has the use of his muscles, may learn to swim or to scate. When shall we meet, and where, that we may talk over these and other matters? There are some topics which will be more properly discussed in conversation than upon paper, I mean on account of their copiousness; for believe me I should not be concerned, if all that I write were copied at the post-office, and read before the king in council. * * * * * * At the same time I solemnly declare, that I will not enlist under the banners of a party: a declaration which is I believe useless, because no party would receive a man, determined as I am to think for himself. To you alone, my friend, and to your interests, I am firmly attached, both from early habit and from mature reason, from ancient affection unchanged for a single moment, and from a full conviction that such affection was well placed. The views and wishes of all other men, I will analyze and weigh with that suspicion and slowness of belief, which my experience, such as it is, has taught me; and to be more particular, although I will be jealous of the *regal* part of our constitution, and always lend an arm towards restraining its proud waves within due limits, yet my most vigilant and strenuous efforts shall be directed against any oligarchy that may rise: being convinced, that on the popular part of every government depends its real force, the obligation of its laws, its welfare, its security, its permanence. I have been led insensibly to write more seriously than I had intended; my letters shall not always be so dull; but with so many public causes of grief or of resentment, who can at all times be gay?

LETTER CXXXVII.

Mr. Jones to the Rev. E. Cartwright.

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, May 16, 1780.

Dear Sir,

SINCE my friends have declared me a candidate for the very honourable seat which Sir Roger Newdigate intends to vacate, I have received many flattering testimonies of regard from several respectable persons; but your letter, dated May 8th, which I did not receive till this morning, is, without a compliment, the fairest and most pleasing fruit of the competition in which I am engaged. The rule of the University, which is a very noble one, forbidding me to solicit votes for myself, I have not been at liberty even to apply to many persons whom it is both a pleasure and honour to know. Your unsolicited approbation is a great reward of my past toil in my literary career, and no small incentive to future exertions. As to my integrity, of which you are pleased to express a good opinion, it has not yet been tried by any very strong temptations; I hope it will resist them if any be thrown in my way. This only I may say (and I think without a boast) that my ambition was always very much bounded, and that my views are already attained by professional success adequate to my highest expectations. Perhaps I shall not be thought very unambitious, if I add, that my great object of imitation is Mr. Selden; and that if I could obtain the same honour which was conferred on him, I should, like him, devote the rest of my life to the service of my constituents and my country, to the practice of an useful profession, and to the unremitted study of our English laws, history, and literature. To be approved by you, and such men as you (if many such could be found), would be a sufficient reward to, &c.

P. S. Permit me to add an ode printed (but not published) before the present competition, and at a time when I should have been certainly made a judge in India, by the kindness of Lord North, if any appointment had taken place. It proves sufficiently that no views or connections can prevent me from declaring my honest sentiments when I think they may be useful to my country.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Mr. Jones to Dr. Wheeler.

My dear Sir, September 2, 1780.

THE parliament being suddenly dissolved, I must beg you, as one of my best and truest friends, to make it known in the University, that I decline giving the learned body any further trouble, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them. It is needless to add, what you well know, that I should never have been the first to have troubled them at all. I always thought a delegation to parliament from so respectable a society,

ciety, a laudable object of true ambition; but I considered it as a distant object, as a reward of long labour and meritorious service in our country: and I conceived, that, had I filled a judge's seat in India, with the approbation of my countrymen, I might on my return be fixed on as a proper representative of the University. Had not that happened which you know, I should no more have thought of standing now, than of asking for a peerage. As to principles in politics, if my success at Oxford, at any future time, depend upon a change of them, my cause is hopeless: I cannot alter or conceal them without abandoning either my reason or my integrity; the first of which is my only guide, and the second my chief comfort in this passage through life. Were I inclined to boast of any thing, I should certainly boast of making those principles my rule of conduct, which I learned from the best of men in ancient and modern times; and which, my reason tells me, are conducive to the happiness of mankind. As to *men*, I am certainly not hostile to the *ministers*, from whom I have received obligations; but I cannot in conscience approve their *measures*.

LETTER CXXXIX.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

My Lord, November 23, 1780.

Had I not been prevented by particular business from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our club*. The election was of course unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester† were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary that we should ever reject such an offer; but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our club I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information, and I trust that as the honour will be ours, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends as those of your lordship and lord Althorpe. I spoke yesterday in Westminster-hall for two hours and a half, on a knotty point of law, and this morning for above an hour, on a very interesting public question; to-morrow I must argue a great cause, and am therefore obliged to conclude with assuring your lordship, that I am, with the highest, &c.

* Generally known by the name of the *Turk's-Head Club*, held in Gerard Street, Soho. The establishment of this club was first proposed by Sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the original members of it were the friends of these three. The number of members was gradually increased to forty, comprehending men of the most distinguished characters, and eminent for their learning, talents, and abilities.

† Dr. Porteus.

LETTER CXL.

The Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr. Jones.*

Dear Sir, Nov. 3, 1781.

A letter from you is always welcome, come sooner or later; yet I cannot help rejoicing at that ceaseless hurry of business, which occasioned your delay in writing, and made me lose a very valuable visit. Riches and reputation, after shewing a little coyness at first, are now making their advances at a very great rate, and will soon be as lavish of their charms as you could wish; yet I know you think too liberally, to let either your friends or your liberty suffer by their engrossing you too much.

I thank you for the nuptial ode, which, notwithstanding its incorrectness, which you need not complain of, is the most genuine imitation of Pindar I have ever seen. I don't know whether I can assent to your criticism on the word *replete*, that it is never used in a good sense. Were it left to me, I would use it in no sense. It has but little meaning. It was never naturalized in conversation, or in prose, and I think makes no figure in verse.

* Dr. Shipley.

I have

I have another present of value to thank you for,—your Essay on the Law of Bailments. To own the truth, your name to the advertisement made me impatient, and I had sent for it and read it before. It appears to me to be clear, just, and accurate, I mean as clear as the subject will permit. My want of law language, and perhaps of a legal understanding, made me feel great difficulty in following you through your very ingenious distinctions and consequences, of which I thought I could perceive the solidity. I foretell that this will be your last work. For the future your business and the public will allow you to write no more.

Though I fear it will not be consistent with your employment in Westminster-hall, I cannot help telling you, that for as many days as you can spare between this time and the meeting of parliament, you will find a warm bed, and a hearty welcome at Chilbolton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughters desire their compliments, and join in the invitation. I am, &c.

LETTER CXLI.

Mr. Jones to Lord Althorpe.

January 5, 1782.

O La bella cosa il far miente! This was my exclamation, my dear Lord, on the 12th of last month, when I found myself, as I thought, at liberty to be a rambler, or an idler, or any thing I pleased: but my *mal di gola* took ample revenge for my abuse and contempt of it, when I wrote to you, by confining me twelve days with a fever and quinsey: and I am now so cramped by the approaching session at Oxford, that I cannot make any long excursion. I inclose my tragical song of "a shepherdess going," with Mazzanti's music, of which my opinion at present is, that the modulation is very artificial, and the harmony good, but that Pergolesi (whom the modern Italians are such puppies as to undervalue) would have made it more pathetic and *heart-rending*, if I may compose such word. I long to hear it sung by Mrs. Poyntz. Pray present the inclosed, in my name, to Lady Althorpe. I hope that I shall in a short time be able to think of you, when I read these charming lines of Catullus †:

> And soon to be completely blest,
> Soon may a young Torquatus rise;
> Who, hanging on his mother's breast,
> To his known sire shall turn his eyes,
> Out-stretch his infant arms awhile,
> Half ope his little lips and smile.
> *(Printed Translation.)*

What a beautiful picture! can Dominichino equal it? How weak are all arts in comparison of poetry and rhetoric! Instead however of *Torquatus*. I would read Spencerus. Do you not think that I have discovered the true use of the fine arts, namely, in relaxing the mind after toil? Man was born for *labour*; his configuration, his passions, his restlessness, all prove it; but labour would wear him out, and the purpose of it be defeated, if he had not intervals of *pleasure;* and unless that pleasure be *innocent*, both he and society must suffer. Now what pleasures are more harmless, if they be nothing else, than those afforded by polite arts and polite literature? Love was given us by the Author of our being as the reward of virtue, and the solace of care; but the base and sordid forms of *artificial*, (which I oppose to *natural*,) society in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence. On the other hand, mere pleasure, to which the idle are not justly entitled, soon satiates, and leaves a vacuity in the mind more unpleasant than actual pain. A just mixture, or interchange of labour and pleasure, appears alone conducive to such happiness as this life affords. Farewell. I have no room to add my useless name, and still more useless professions of friendship.

† The original is quoted by Mr. Jones:—
Torquatus volo parvulus,
Matris è gremio suæ
Porrigens teneras manus,
Dulce rideat ad patrem,
Semi-hiante labello.

LETTER CXLII.

Mr. Jones to Mr. Thomas Yeates.

Lamb's Buildings, April 25, 1782.

Sir,

IT was not till within these very few days that I received, on my return from the circuit, your obliging letter, dated the 18th of March, which, had I been so fortunate as to have received earlier, I should have made a point of answering immediately. The society for constitutional information, by electing me one of their members, will confer upon me an honour, which I am wholly unconscious of deserving, but which is so flattering to me, that I accept of their offer with pleasure and gratitude. I should indeed long ago have testified my regard for so useful an institution by an offer of my humble service in promoting it, if I had not really despaired in my present situation of being able to attend your meetings as often as I should ardently wish.

My future life shall certainly be devoted to the support of that excellent constitution, which it is the object of your society to unfold and elucidate; and from this resolution long and deliberately made, no prospects, no connections, no station here, or abroad, no fear of danger, or hope of advantage to myself, shall ever deter or allure me.

A form of government so apparently conducive to the true happiness of the community, must be admired as soon as it is understood, and if reason and virtue have any influence in human breasts, ought to be preserved by any exertions, and at any hazard. Care must now be taken, lest by reducing the regal power to its just level, we raise the aristocratical to a dangerous height; since it is from the people that we can deduce the obligation of our laws, and the authority of magistrates.

On the people depend the welfare, the security, and the permanence of every legal government; in the people must reside all substantial power; and to the people must all those, in whose ability and knowledge we sometimes wisely, often imprudently, confide, be always accountable for the due exercise of that power with which they are for a time entrusted.

If the properties of all good government be considered as duly distributed in the different parts of our limited republic, goodness ought to be the distinguished attribute of the crown, wisdom of the aristocracy, but power and fortitude of the people

May justice and humanity prevail in them all!

I am, &c.

LETTER CXLIII.

Mr. Jones to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

Wimbledon Park, Sept. 13, 1782.

My Lord,

IF your Lordship received my letter from Calais, you will not be much surprised to see the date of this, and the place where I now am writing, while Lady Spencer is making morning visits. Mr. and Mrs. Poyntz have this instant left us. Lord Althorpe being in Northamptonshire, I must give myself some consolation for my disappointment in missing him, by scribbling a few lines to him, as soon as I have finished these with which I now trouble your lordship. My excursion to the United *Provinces* (which has been the substitute for my intended expedition to the United *States*) was extremely pleasing and improving to me. I returned last Monday, and finding all my friends dispersed in various parts of England, am going for a few days into Buckinghamshire, whence I shall go to Oxford, and must continue there till the sessions. Should your lordship be in Hampshire any time in October, and should it be in all respects convenient to you, I will accept this year, with great pleasure, the obliging invitation to Chilbolton, which I was unfortunately prevented from accepting last year. I lament the unhappy dissentions among our great men, and clearly see the vanity of my anxious wish, that they would have played in tune some time longer in the political concert.

The delays about the India judgeship have, it is true, greatly injured me; but with my patience and assiduity, I could easily recover my lost ground. I must however take the liberty here to allude to a most obliging letter of your lordship from Chilbolton, which I received so long ago as last November, but was prevented from answering till you came to town. It was inexpressibly flattering to me, but my intimate

intimate knowledge of the nature of my profession obliges me to assure you, that it requires the *whole man*, and admits of no concurrent pursuits; that, consequently, I must either give it up, or it will engross me so much, that I shall not for some years be *able to enjoy the society of my friends, or the sweets of liberty*. Whether it be a wise part to live uncomfortably, in order to die wealthy, is another question; but this I know by experience, and have heard old practitioners make the same observation, that a lawyer who is in earnest, must be chained to his chambers and the bar for ten or twelve years together. In regard to your lordship's indulgent and flattering prediction, that my Essay on Bailment would be my last work, and that for the future, business and the public would allow me to write no more, I doubt whether it will be accomplished, whatever may be my practice or situation; for I have already prepared many tracts on jurisprudence; and when I see the volumes written by Lord Coke, whose annual gains were twelve or fourteen thousand pounds, by Lord Bacon, Sir Matthew Hale, and a number of judges and chancellors, I cannot think that I should be hurt in my professional career, by publishing now and then a law tract upon some interesting branch of the science; and the science itself is indeed so complex, that, without *writing*, which is *the chain of memory*, it is impossible to remember a thousandth part of what we read or hear. Since it is my wish therefore to become in time as great a lawyer as Sulpicius, I shall probably leave as many volumes of my works, as he is said to have written. As to politics, I begin to think, that the natural propensity of men to dissent from one another, will prevent them, in a corrupt age, from uniting in any laudable design; and at present I have nothing to do but to *rest on my oars*, which the Greek philosophers, I believe, called πὶ χειν, a word which Cicero applies in one of his letters to the same subject.

My best respects to the ladies, for whom I would certainly have brought some Virginia nightingales, if my western expedition had taken place, since I was informed by the captain, with whom I should have sailed, that they might have been kept in the cabin without any danger.

LETTER CXLIV.

Mr. Jones to Lady Spencer.

Chilbolton, Oct. 21, 1782.

Madam,

THOUGH I wrote so lately to your Ladyship, and cannot hope by any thing I can now say to make amends for the dulness of my last letter; yet, as some of the ladies here are this moment writing to St. James's-place, I cannot prevail on myself to decline joining so agreeable a party, especially as the very favourable accounts which were last night received of Lord Spencer's health have given me spirits, and made me eager to offer my sincere congratulations. Yes; I rejoice with the truest sincerity, that his lordship's health is so likely to be re-established, for I cannot name a man of rank in the nation, in whose health the public and all mankind, as well as his family and friends, are more truly interested. I have passed my time at Chilbolton so agreably, that ten days have appeared like one: and it gives me concern that the near approach of the term will oblige me to leave so charming and improving a society at the end of this week: after which I shall hope to find my friends at Midgham in perfect health; and then farewell, a long farewell to all my rational and interesting pleasures, which must be succeeded by the drudgery of drawing bills in equity, the toil of answering cases, the squabbles of the bar, and the more vexatious dissentions and conflicts of the political world, which I vainly deprecated, and now as vainly deplore. How happy would it be, if statesmen had more *music in their souls*, and could bring themselves to consider that what harmony is in a concert, such is union in a state; but in the great orchestra of politics, I find so many musicians out of humour, and instruments out of tune, that I am more tormented by such dissonance than the man in Hogarth's print, and am more desirous than ever of being transported to the distance of five thousand leagues from all this fatal discord. Without a metaphor, I lament with anguish the bitterness and animosity with which some of my friends have been assailing others; as if empty altercation could be the means of procuring any good to this afflicted country. I find myself in more instances than one, like poor Petrarch, wishing to pass my days

Fra'

Fra' magnanimi pochi; a chi 'l ben piace,
Di lor chi un' assecura:
Io vo gridando *pace, pace, pace.*

—but I shall not be heard, and must console myself with the pleasing hope, that your ladyship, and the few friends of virtue and humanity, will agree in this sentiment with, &c.

LETTER CXLV.

Sir William Jones to Lord Ashburton.

April 27, 1783.

YOUR kind letter found me on board the Crocodile: I should have been very unhappy had it missed me, since I have long habituated myself to set the highest value on every word you speak, and every line you write. Of the two inclosed letters to our friends, Impey and Chambers, I will take the greatest care, and will punctually follow your directions as to the first of them. My departure was sudden indeed; but the Admiralty were so anxious for the sailing of this frigate, and their orders were so peremptory, that it was impossible to wait for any thing but a breeze. Our voyage has hitherto been tolerably pleasant, and, since we left the Channel, very quick. We begin to see albicores about the ship, and to perceive an agreeable change of climate. Our days, though short, give me ample time for study, recreation, and exercise: but my joy and delight proceed from the surprising health and spirits of Anna Maria, who joins me in affectionate remembrance to Lady Ashburton. As to you, my dear Lord, we consider you as the spring and fountain of our happiness, as the author and parent, (a Roman would have added, what the coldness of our northern language will hardly admit) the *god* of our fortunes. It is possible indeed, that by incessant labour and irksome attendance at the bar, I might in due time have attained all that my very limited ambition could aspire to; but in no other station than that which I owe to your friendship, could I have gratified at once my boundless curiosity concerning the people of the East, continued the exercise of my profession, in which I sincerely delight, and enjoyed at the same time the comforts of domestic life. The grand jury of Denbighshire, I have found, I understand, the bill against the Dean of St. Asaph, for publishing my dialogue; but as an indictment for a theoretical essay on government was I believe never before known, I have no apprehension for the consequences. As to the doctrines in the tract, though I shall certainly not preach them to the Indians, who must and will be governed by absolute power, yet I shall go through life with a persuasion, that they are just and rational, that substantial freedom is both the daughter and parent of virtue, and that virtue is the only source of public and private felicity. Farewell.

LETTER CXLVI.

Sir William Jones to Dr. Patrick Russel.

Calcutta, March 10, 1784.

YOU would readily excuse my delay in answering your obliging letter, if you could form an idea of the incessant hurry and confusion, in which I have been kept ever since my arrival in Bengal, by necessary business, or necessary formalities, and by the difficulty of settling myself to my mind, in a country so different from that which I have left. I am indeed at best, but a bad correspondent; for I never write by candlelight, and find so much Arabic or Persian to read, that all my leisure in a morning, is hardly sufficient for a thousandth part of the reading that would be highly agreeable and useful to me; and as I purpose to spend the long vacation up the country, I wish to be a match in conversation with the learned natives, whom I may happen to meet.

I rejoice that you are so near, but lament that you are not nearer, and am not without hope, that you may one day be tempted to visit Bengal, where I flatter myself you will give me as much of your company as possible.

Many thanks for your kind hints in regard to my health. As to me, I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the morbus literatorum, for which there is hardly any remedy, but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest; yet the activity of my

mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm, and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health. If you should meet with any curiosities on the coast, either in your botanical rambles or in reading, and will communicate them to our society, lately instituted for enquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, we shall give you our hearty thanks. There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce at Gwender. I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account. Every day supplies me with something new in Oriental learning, and if I were to stay here half a century, I should be continually amused.

LETTER CXLVII.

Sir William Jones to ———.

April 13, 1784.

* * * * * * * *

I AM discouraged from writing to you as copiously as I wish, by the fear that my letter may never reach you. I inclose however a hymn to the Indian cupid, which is here said to be the only correct specimen of Hindu mythology that has appeared; it is certainly new and quite original, except the form of the stanza, which is Milton's. I add the character of Lord Ashburton, which my zeal for his fame prompted me to publish.

* * * * * * * *

Had I dreamt that the dialogue would have made such a stir, I should certainly have taken more pains with it. I will never cease to avow and justify the doctrine comprised in it. I meant it merely as an imitation of one of Plato's, where a boy wholly ignorant of geometry, is made by a few simple questions to demonstrate a proposition, and I intended to inculcate, that the principles of government were so obvious and intelligible, that a clown might be brought to understand them. As to raising sedition, I as much thought of raising a church.

My dialogue contains my system, which I have ever avowed, and ever will avow; but I perfectly agree (and no man of sound intellect can disagree) that such a system is wholly inapplicable to this country, where millions of men are so wedded to inveterate prejudices and habits, that if liberty could be forced upon them by Britain, it would make them as miserable as the cruelest despotism.

Pray remember me affectionately to all my friends at the bar, whom I have not time to enumerate, and assure my academical and professional friends, that I will write to them all when I have leisure. Farewell, &c.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Charles Chapman, Esq.

Gardens, near Allipore, April 26, 1784.

ALLOW me, dear Sir, to give you the warmest thanks in my own name, and in that of our infant society, for the pleasure which we have received from your interesting account of Cochin-china, with considerable extracts from which we have been favoured by our patrons. Our meetings are well attended, and the society may really be said, considering the recent time of its establishment, to flourish.

We have been rather indisposed, the weather being such as we had no idea of in England, excessive heat at noon, and an incessant high wind from morning to night; at this moment it blows a hurricane, and my study reminds me of my cabin at sea. Our way of life however is quite pastoral in this retired spot; as my prime favourites, among all our pets, are two large English sheep, which came with us from Spithead, and, having narrowly escaped the knife, are to live as long and as happily with us as they can; they follow us for bread, and are perfectly domestic. We are literally lulled to sleep by Persian nightingales, and cease to wonder, that the Bulbul, with a *thousand tales*, makes such a figure in Oriental poetry. Since I am resolved to sit regularly in court as long as I am well, not knowing how soon I may be forced to remit my attention to business, I shall not be at liberty to enter my budgerow till near the end of July, and must be again in Calcutta on the 22d of October, so that my time will be very limited; and I shall wish if possible to see Benares.

LETTER

LETTER CXLIX.

Sir William Jones to Miss E. Shipley.

On the Ganges, Sept. 7, 1786.

You do too much honour, my dear Madam, to my compositions; they amuse me in the few hours of leisure that my business allows, and if they amuse my friends, I am amply rewarded.

Mà si 'l Latino e'l Greco
Parlan di me dopo la morte, è un vento;
Ond' io, perche pavento
Adunar sempre quel ch'un' ora sgombre,
Vorrei 'l vero abbraciar lassando l'ombre.

We talk of the year 1790, as the happy limit of our residence in this unpropitious climate; but this must be a family secret, lest applications should be made for my place, and I should be shoved out before my resignation. God grant that the bad state of my Anna's health, may not compel her to leave India before me; I should remain like a man with a dead palsy on one of his sides; but it were better to lose one side for a time than both for ever. I do not mean that she has been, or is likely to be, in danger from her complaints. I have proposed a visit to her friend, Lady Campbell, and she seemed to receive the proposal with pleasure; the sea air, and change of scene at a proper season, may do more than all the faculty with all their prescriptions. As to politics and ministers, let me whisper another secret in your ear:

Io non credo piu àl *nero* ch' all' *azzurro*,

and, as to coalitions, if the *nero* be mixed with the *azzurro*, they will only make a dirtier colour. India is yet secure, and improveable beyond imagination; it is not however in such a state of security, but that wise politicians may, with strong well-timed exertions and well applied address, contrive to lose it. The discharge of my duty, and the study of Indian laws in their original languages (which is no inconsiderable part of my duty) are an excuse for my neglect of writing letters; and indeed I find by experience, that I can take up my pen for that purpose but once a year, and I have a hundred unanswered letters now lying before me, but my Anna, who is my secretary of state, and first or rather *sole* lady of the treasury, has written volumes. Loves and regards to all who love and regard us; as to compliments, they are unmeaning things, and neither become me to send, nor you to convey.

I am, &c.

LETTER CL.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

June 24.

* * * * * * * * * * * I am well, rising constantly between three and four, and usually walking two or three miles before sun-rise; my wife is tolerably well; and we only lament, that the damp weather will soon oblige us to leave our herds and flocks, and all our rural delights on the banks of the Baghiratti. The business of the court will continue at least two months longer, after which I purpose to take a house at Bandell or Hugli, and pass my autumnal vacation as usual with the Hindu bards. I have read your pundit's curious book twice in Sanscrit, and will have it elegantly copied; the *Dabistan* also I have read through twice with great attention; and both copies are ready to be returned, as you shall direct. Mr. R. Johnston thinks he has a young friend who will translate the *Dabistan*, and the greatest part of it would be very interesting to a curious reader, but some of it cannot be translated. It contains more recondite learning, more entertaining history, more beautiful specimens of poetry, more ingenuity and wit, more indecency and blasphemy, than I ever saw collected in a single volume; the two last are not the author's, but are introduced in the chapters on the heretics and infidels of India. On the whole, it is the most amusing and instructive book I ever read in Persian.

I hear nothing from Europe, but what all the papers contain; and that is enough to make me rejoice exceedingly, that I am in Asia. Those with whom I have spent some of my happiest hours, and hope to spend many more on my return to England, are tearing one another to pieces, with the enmity that is proverbial here, of the snake and the ichneumon.

I have nothing left therefore, but to wish what is right and just may prevail, to discharge my public duties with unremitted attention, and to recreate myself at leisure with the literature of this interesting country.

LETTER CLI.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

Chrishna-nagur, Aug. 16, 1786.

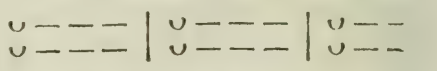
I THANK you heartily, my dear Sir, for the tender strains of the unfortunate Charlotte*, which have given us pleasure and pain; the sonnets which relate to herself are incomparably the best. Petrarca is little known; his sonnets, especially the first book, are the least valuable of his works, and contain less natural sentiments than those of the swan of Avon; but his odes which are political, are equal to the lyric poems of the Grecks; and his triumphs are in a triumphant strain of sublimity and magnificence. Anna Maria gives you many thanks for the pleasure you have procured her. We are in love with this pastoral cottage; but though these three months are called a vacation, yet I have no vacant hours. It rarely happens that favourite studies are closely connected with the strict discharge of our duty, as mine happily are; even in this cottage I am assisting the court by studying Arabic and Sanscrit, and have now rendered it an impossibility for the Mohammedan or Hindu lawyers to impose upon us with erroneous opinions.

This brings to my mind your honest pundit, Rhadacaunt, who refused, I hear, the office of pundit to the court, and told Mr. Hastings that he would not accept of it, if the salary were doubled; his scruples were probably religious; but they would put it out of my power to serve him, should the office again be vacant. His unvarnished tale I would have repeated to you, if we had not missed one another on the river; but since I despair of seeing you until my return to Calcutta, at the end of October, I will set it down here, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:

"My father (said he) died at the age "of an hundred years, and my mother, "who was eighty years old, became a "*sati*, and burned herself to expiate sins. "They left me little besides good princi- "ples. Mr. Hastings purchased for me "a piece of land, which at first yielded "twelve hundred rupees a year; but "lately, either through my inattention "or through accident, it has produced "only one thousand. This would be "sufficient for me and my family; but "the duty of Brahmans is not only to "teach the youths of their sect, but to "relieve those who are poor. I made "many presents to poor scholars and "others in distress, and for this purpose "I anticipated my income: I was then "obliged to borrow for my family ex- "penses, and I now owe about three "thousand rupees. This debt is my only "cause of uneasiness in this world, I "would have mentioned it to Mr. Shore, "but I was ashamed."

Now the question is, how he can be set upon his legs again, when I hope he will be more prudent. If Bahman* should return to Persia, I can afford to give him one hundred rupees a month, till his debt shall be discharged out of his rents; but at present, I pay more in salaries to my native scholars than I can well afford; nevertheless I will cheerfully join you in any mode of clearing the honest man, that can be suggested; and I should assist him merely for his own sake, as I have more Brahmanical teachers than I can find time to hear.

I send you not an elegant pathetic sonnet, but the wildest and strangest poem that was ever written, Khakani's complaint in prison. The whole is a menace, that he would change his religion, and seek protection among the Christians, or the Gabres. It contains one or two proper names, of which I find no full explanation even in a commentary professedly written to illustrate the poem. The fire of Khakani's genius blazes through the smoke of his erudition; the measure of the poem, which will enable you to correct the errors of the copies, is



* Sonnets by Charlotte Smith.

* A parsi and a native of Yezd, employed by Sir William Jones as a reader.

with

with a strong accent on the last syllable of each foot.

Adieu, my dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLII.

Sir William Jones to Dr. Patrick Russel.

Chrishna-nagur, Sept. 24, 1788.

I HAVE acted like those libertines who defer repentance till the hour of death, and then find that they have not time to repent. Thus I deferred the pleasure of answering letters till the vacation, but found the term and session so long, that I have scarce any vacation at all. I must therefore write very laconically, thanking you heartily for your kind letters, and very curious papers in natural history, wishing that the public may soon gather the fruit of your learned labours.

The business of the court this year, has left me no leisure to examine flowers at Chrishna-nagur. The *sija* is never in blossom when I am here; but though it has something of the form of the *cactus*, yet I imagine from the milk of it, that it is an *Euphorbia*.

With all my exertions I cannot procure any fresh spikenard; but I will not desist. I have two native physicians in my family, but they have only seen it in a dry state.

I am very sorry to find that you are leaving us, as I have no chance of seeing Europe till the end of the eighteenth century. I wish you and your brother and his family a prosperous and speedy voyage. It is impossible for me to write more than Vive, vale!

LETTER CLIII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Sept. 24, 1788.

WE had incessant labour for six hours a day, for three whole months, in the hot season between the tropics, and, what is a sad consequence of long sittings, we have scarcely any vacation. I can therefore only write to you a few lines this autumn. Before your brother sent me Lewisdon Hill, I had read it twice aloud to different companies, with great delight to myself and to them: thank the author in my name. I believe his nameless rivulet is called *Bret* or *Brit*, (whence *Bridport*) by Michael Drayton, who describes the fruitful Marshwood. * * * *

Pray assure all who care for me, or whom I am likely to care for, that I never, directly or indirectly, asked for the succession to Sir E. Impey, and that, if any indiscreet friend of mine has asked for it in my name, the request was not made by my desire, and never would have been made with my assent.

"Co' magnanimi pochi, a chi 'l ben piace,"

I have enough, but if I had not, I think an ambitious judge a very dishonourable and mischievous character. Besides, I never would have opposed Sir R. Chambers, who has been my friend twenty-five years, and wants money, which I do not.

I have fixed on the year 1800 for my return towards Europe, if I live so long, and hope to begin the new century auspiciously among my friends in England.

P. S. Since I wrote my letter, I have amused myself with composing the annexed ode to Abundance. I took up ten or twelve hours to compose and copy it; but I must now leave poetry, and return for ten months to J. N. and J. S.

LETTER CLIV.

Sir William Jones to J. Shore, Esq.

1789.

WE have finished the twentieth, and last book of Guicciardini's History, the most authentic, I believe (may I add, I fear) that ever was composed. I believe it, because the historian was an actor in his terrible drama, and personally knew the principal performers in it; and I fear it, because it exhibits the woeful picture of society in the 15th and 16th centuries. If you can spare *Reid*, we are now ready for him, and will restore his two volumes on our return from Chrishna-nagur.

When we meet, I will give you an account of my progress in detecting a most impudent fraud, in forging a Sanscrit book on oaths, by Hindus, since I saw you. The book has been brought to me, on a few yellow Bengal leaves apparently

modern. The Brahman, who brought it from Sambhu Chaudra Rai, said it was twelve years old; I believe it had not been written twelve days. He said the original work of Mahadeva himself, from which the prohibition of swearing by the water of the Ganges was extracted, was at Chrishna-nagur: I desired him to tell Sambhu Chaudra, who wants me to admit him a suitor, *in formâ pauperis*, without taking his *oath*, that unless he brought me the original, and that apparently ancient, I should be convinced that he meant to impose upon me.

LETTER CLV.

Sir William Jones to Mr. Justice Hyde.

Sept. 19, 1789.

You have given Lady Jones great pleasure, by informing us from so good authority, that a ship is arrived from England; she presents you with her best compliments.

Most readily shall I acquiesce in any alleviation of Horrebow's misery, that you and Sir Robert Chambers shall think just and legal. I have not one law book with me, nor if I had many, should I perfectly know where to look for a mitigation by the court of a sentence, which they pronounced after full consideration of all its probable effects on the person condemned. I much doubt, whether it can legally be done; nor do I think the petition states any urgent reason for it. First, he mentions *losses already sustained* (not therefore to be prevented by his enlargement), and, in my opinion, they cannot easily be more than he deserves. Next, his wife's health may have been injured by his disgrace, and may not be restored by our shortening the time of his confinement, which, if I remember, is almost half expired, and was as short as justice tempered with lenity would allow. His own health is not said to be affected by the imprisonment in such a place, at such a season, for if it were proved that he were dangerously ill, we might, I suppose, remove him to a healthier place, or even let him go to sea, if able surgeons swore, that in their serious opinion, nothing else could save his life. That is by no means the case, and I confess, I have no compassion for him; my compassion is for the enslaved children and their parents. Nevertheless I know the benevolence of your heart, and shall approve whatever you and Sir R. C. may do, if any precedent can be found or recollected of a power in the court to do what is now prayed.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLVI.

Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks.

Dear Sir Joseph, Sept. 17, 1789.

The season for paying my annual epistolary rents being returned with the rough gales of the autumnal equinox, I am eager to offer my tribute, where it is most due, to my best landlord, who, instead of claiming, like the India company, sixteen shillings in the pound for the neat profits of my farm (I speak correctly, though metaphorically) voluntarily offers me indulgences, even if I should run in arrears.

You have received, I trust, the pods of the finest Dacca cotton, with which the commercial resident at that station supplied me, and which I sent by different conveyances, some inclosed to yourself, some to Sir George Young, and some by private hands. But I have always found it safer to send letters and small parcels by the public packet, than by careless and inconsiderate individuals. I am not partial to the *pryangu*, which I now find is its true name; but Mr. Shore found benefit from it, and procured the fresh plants from Arracan, which died unluckily in their way to Calcutta. But seriously, it deserves a longer trial before its tonic virtues, if it have any, can be ascertained. It is certainly not so fine a bitter as camomile or columbo root.

I wish politics at the devil, but hope that, when the King recovered, science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that party as it is called (I call it faction, because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest, which excludes all principle) has found its way into a literary club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me: but I should never think of introducing them among men of science, and if, on my return to Europe ten or twelve years hence,

hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician who may wish to be one of the party.

An intimate friend of Mr. Blane has written to him, at my request, for the newly discovered fragrant grass; and should the plants be sent before the last ships of the season sail, they shall be sent to you. Whether they be the nard of the ancients, I must doubt, because we have sweet grasses here of innumerable species; and Reuben Burrow brought me an odoriferous grass from the place where the Ganges enters India, and where it covers whole acres, and perfumes the whole country. From his account of it, I suspect it to be Mr. Blane's; but I could make nothing of the dry specimens, except that they differed widely from the *Jatamansi*, which I am persuaded is the Indian nard of Ptolemy. I can only procure the dry *Jatamansi*, but if I can get the stalks, roots, and flowers from Butan, I will send them to you. Since the death of Kœnig, we are in great want of a professed botanist. I have twice read with rapture the *Philosophia Botanica*, and have Murray's edition of the "genera et species plantarum" always with me; but, as I am no lynx, like Linnæus, I cannot examine minute blossoms, especially those of grasses.

We are far advanced in the second volume of our Transactions.

LETTER CLVII.

Sir William Jones to John Wilmot, Esq.

Sept. 20, 1789.

EVERY sentence in your letter gave me great pleasure, and particularly the pleasing and just account of your truly venerable father. Lady Jones, after the first pang for the loss of hers, resigned herself with true piety to the will of God. She is very weak, and always ill during the heats. I have been, ever since my seasoning, as they call it, perfectly well, notwithstanding incessant business seven hours in a day, for four or five months in a year, and unremitted application, during the vacations, to a vast and interesting study, *a complete knowledge of India*, which I can only attain in the country itself, and I do not mean to stay in the country longer than the last year of the eighteenth century. I rejoice that the King is well, but take no interest in the contests of your aristocratical factions. The time never was, when I would have enlisted under the banners of any faction, though I might have carried a pair of colours, if I had not spurned them, in either legion. My party is that of the whole people, and my principles, which the law taught me, are only to be changed by a change of existence.

LETTER CLVIII.

Sir William Jones to Mr. Justice Hyde.

Oct. 20, 1789.

THOUGH I hope, my dear Sir, to be with you almost as soon as this letter, yet I write it because it is the last that I shall write to any one for the next eleven months, and I feel so light, after the completion of my severe epistolary task, that I am disposed to play a voluntary. I have answered fifty very long letters from Europe, and a multitude of short ones; among the rest, I had one from the Chief Baron, who desires his remembrance to you by the title of his old and worthy friend. Another from Master Wilmot informs me, that his father, Sir Eardley, had nearly ended his eightieth year, with as good health, and as clear intellects, as he ever had in the prime of life. When I express a hope of seeing you in two or three days, it is only a hope; for I shall affront the Mandarin at Chinsura*, if I do not make my annual visit to him; now I can only visit him at night, and the wind and tide may delay me, as they did last year. In all events, I shall be with you if I live, before the end of the week, as I am preparing to go on board my pinnace. Besides my annuities of Europe letters, which I pay at this season, I have been winding up all the odds and ends of all my private or literary concerns, and shall think of nothing for eleven months to come, but law, European or Indian. I have written four papers for our expiring society, on very curious subjects, and have prepared materials for a discourse on the Chinese: the society is a puny, ricketty child, and must be fed

* Mr. Titsingh, Governor of Chinsura.

with pap; nor shall it die by my fault; but die it must, for I cannot alone support it. In my youthful days, I was always ready to join in a dance or a concert, but I could never bring myself to dance a solitary hornpipe, or to play a solo. When I see Titsingh (who, by the way, will never write any thing for us, as long as his own Batavian society subsists), I will procure full information concerning the pincushion rice, and will report it to you. Lady Jones is as usual, and sends her best remembrance. I too am as usual, and as ever, dear Sir, your faithful, &c.

LETTER CLIX.

Sir Wm. Jones to Sir J. Macpherson, Bart.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 15, 1790.

I GIVE you hearty thanks for your postscript, which (as you enjoin secrecy) I will only allude to ambiguously, lest this letter should fall into other hands than yours. Be assured, that what I am going to say does not proceed from an imperfect sense of your kindness, but really I want no addition to my fortune, which is enough for me; and if the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a different station from that which I now fill, should most gratefully and respectfully decline it. The character of an ambitious judge is, in my opinion, very dangerous to public justice; and if I were a sole legislator, it should be enacted that every judge, as well as every bishop, should remain for life in the place which he first accepted. This is not the language of a cynic, but of a man, who loves his friends, his country, and mankind; who knows the short duration of human life, recollects that he has lived four-and-forty years, and has learned to be contented. Of public affairs you will receive better intelligence, than I am able to give you. My private life is similar to that which you remember: seven hours a day on an average are occupied by my duties as a magistrate, and one hour to the new Indian digest, for one hour in the evening I read aloud to Lady Jones. We are now travelling to the sources of the Nile with Mr. Bruce, whose work is very interesting and important. The second volume of the Asiatic Transactions is printed, and the third ready for the press. I jabber Sanscrit every day with the pundits, and hope, before I leave India, to understand it as well as I do Latin. Among my letters I find one directed to you; I have unsealed it, and though it only shews that I was not inattentive to the note, with which you favoured me on the eve of your departure, yet I annex it because it was yours, though brought back by my servant.

The latter part of it will raise melancholy ideas; but death, if we look at it firmly, is only a change of place: every departure of a friend is a sort of death; and we are all continually dying and reviving. We shall all meet; I hope to meet you again in India; but, wherever we meet, I expect to see you well and happy. None of your friends can wish for your health and happiness more ardently than, my dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLX.

Sir William Jones to Sir J. Sinclair, Bart. Whitehall.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 15, 1791.

YOU may rely upon my best endeavours to procure information concerning the Asiatic wool, or soft hair; and the animals that carry it. I had the pleasure of circulating your very interesting tracts at Calcutta, and of exhibiting the specimens of very beautiful wool with which you favoured me. My own time, however, is engaged from morning to night in discharging my public duties, and in arranging the new digest of Indian laws. I must therefore depend chiefly on others in procuring the information you are desirous of obtaining. Mr. Bebb of the board of trade, and Colonel Kyd who superintends the Company's garden, have promised to assist me. The wool of these provinces is too coarse to be of use; but that of Kerman in Persia, which you know by the name of *Carmanian* wool, is reckoned exquisitely fine, and you might I suppose procure the sheep from Bombay. The shawl goats would live, I imagine, and breed, in England; but it is no less difficult to procure the females from Cashmir, than to procure mares from Arabia. When you see Mr. Richardson, do me the favour to give him my best thanks for

for the parcel which he sent me by the desire of the Highland Society.

LETTER CLXI.

Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 18, 1791.

I THANK you heartily for your kind letters, but perhaps I cannot express my thanks better than by answering them them as exactly as I am able.

First, as to sending plants from India, I beg you to accept my excuses, and to make them to Sir George Young, for my apparent inattention to such commissions. In short, if you wish to transfer our Indian plants to the Western islands, the Company must direct Kyd and Roxburgh to send them, and their own captains to receive them, and attend to them.

We are in sad want of a travelling botanist, with some share of my poor friend Kœnig's knowledge and zeal. A stationary botanist would fix on the indigofera, as the chief object of his care. Roxburgh will do much on the coast, if he can be relieved from his terrible headachs, but here we have no assistance.

I have neither eyes nor time for a botanist, yet with Lady Jones's assistance, I am continually advancing; and we have examined about 170 Linnæan *genera*. She brought home, a morning or two ago, the most lovely *epidendrum* that ever was seen, but the description of it would take up too much room in a letter; it grew on a lofty amra, but it is an air plant, and puts forth its fragrant enamelled blossoms in a pot without earth or water: none of the many species of Linnæus corresponds exactly with it. You must not imagine that, because I am, and shall be, saucy about the Linnæan language, that I have not the highest veneration for its great author; but I think his diction barbarous and pedantic, particularly in his *Philosophia Botanica*, which I have a right to criticise, having read it three times with equal attention and pleasure. Had Van Rheede exhibited the Sanscrit names with accuracy, we should not be puzzled with reading the Indian poems and medical tracts; but in all his twelve volumes, I have not found above ten or twelve names correctly expressed, either in Sanscrit or Arabic. I shall touch again on botany, but I proceed with your first letter. I have little knowledge of Yacob Bruce; but his five volumes, which I read aloud, (except some passages which I could only read with my eyes) are so entertaining that I wished for five more, and readily forgave not only his mistakes in the botanical language, and in Arabic, but even his arrogance, which he carries *extra flammantia mœnia mundi*.

Keir's paper on distilling I never saw in print, though I must have heard it read by our secretary; but as the worthy author of it is in London, where you will have probably met him, he will satisfy you on the subject.

The *madhuca* is, beyond a doubt, the *bassia;* but I can safely assert, that not one of fifty blossoms which I have examined, had 16 filaments, 8 above the throat, and 8 within the tube. That Kœnig, whom I knew to be very accurate, had seen such a character, I doubt not, but he should not have set it down as constant. I frequently saw 26 and 28 filaments, sometimes 12, and the average was about 20 or 22. By the way, my excellent friend, you will do us capital service, either by printing Kœnig's manuscripts, or by sending us a copy of them; and we will send you in return, not only the correct Sanscrit names, but the plants themselves, at least the seeds, if you can prevail on any captain to take care of them. * * * * * * * * * That the poem of Calidas entertained you, gives me great pleasure, but it diverts me extremely to hear from others, that the authenticity of the poem is doubted in England; but I am not sure that my own errors of inattention may not have occasioned mistakes. The use of the pollen in flowers is, I believe, well known to the Brahmans; but I am not sure, that I have not added the epithet *prolific*, to distinguish it from common *dust*, which would have been the exact version of *renu*. The blue *nymphœa*, which I have sound reasons for believing the *lotus* of Egypt, is a native of Upper India; here we have only the white and rose-coloured. *Filament* is not used as a botanical word, but merely as a thread, and the filaments for the bracelet are drawn from the stalk of the *nymphœa*. The *hart* properly so called, may not be a native of Bengal; but Calidas lived at Ugein, and lays his scene near the northern mountains; all the

the rest is clear: bears and boars, and all wild beasts have been hunted here immemorially. The *cocila*, sings charmingly here in the spring; Polier will shew you drawings of the male and female, but will perhaps call it co-il: the story of its eggs always struck me as very remarkable. The *amra* is *mangifera*; the mellica, I believe, *nyctanthes zambak*; the madhavi creeper, *banisteria*. The *cusa*, I cannot see in blossom. The *savisha* is *mimosa odoratissima*, the pippála, *ficus religiosa*. If I recollect *lacsha*, it is not a plant, but *lac*. *Vana dusini* is a Sanscrit epithet of the *banisteria*. As to nard, I know not what to say; if the Greeks meant only fragrant grass, we have nards in abundance, *acorus*, *schoenus*, *anaropogon*, *cyperus*, &c. But I have no evidence that they meant any such thing. On Arrian, or rather on Aristobulus we cannot safely rely, as they place cinnamon in Arabia, and myrrh in Persia. Should any travelling botanist find the species of *andropogon*, mentioned by Dr. Blane in the plains of Gedrosia, it would be some evidence, but would at the same time prove that it was not the Indian nard, which never was supposed to grow in Persia. As at present advised, I believe the Indian nard of the ancients to have been a valerian, at least the nard of Ptolemy, which is brought from the very country, mentioned by him as famed for spikenard.

And now, my dear Sir Joseph, I have gone through both your letters: I am, for many good reasons, a bad correspondent, but principally because the discharge of my public duties leaves me no more time than is sufficient for necessary refreshments and relaxation.

The last twenty years of my life I shall spend, I trust, in a studious retreat; and if you know of a pleasant country house to be disposed of in your part of Middlesex, with pasture-ground for my cattle, and garden-ground enough for my amusement, have the goodness to inform me of it. I shall be happy in being your neighbour, and though I write little now, will talk then as much as you please.

I believe I shall send a box of inestimable manuscripts, Sanscrit and Arabic, to your friendly care. If I return to England, you will restore them to me; if I die in my voyage to China, or my journey through Persia, you will dispose of them as you please. Wherever I may die, I shall be, while I live, *my* dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CXLII.

Sir Wm. Jones to Warren Hastings, Esq.

Chrishna-nagur, Oct. 17, 1791.

My dear Sir,

BEFORE you can receive this, you will, I doubt not, have obtained a complete triumph over your persecutors; and your character will have risen, not brighter indeed, but more conspicuously bright, from the furnace of their persecution. Happy should I be if I could congratulate you in person on your victory; but though I have a fortune in England, which might satisfy a man of letters, yet I have not enough to establish that absolute independence, which has been the chief end and aim of my life; and I must stay in this country a few years longer: Lady Jones has however promised me to take her passage for Europe in January 1793, and I will follow her when I can. She is pretty well, and presents her kindest remembrance to you and Mrs. Hastings, whom I thank most heartily for a very obliging and elegant letter. My own health has, by God's blessing, been very firm, but my eyes are weak, and I have constantly employed them eight or nine hours a day. My principal amusement is botany, and the conversation of the pundits, with whom I talk fluently in the language of the *gods*; and my business, besides the discharge of my public duties, is the translation of Menu, and of the digest which has been compiled at my instance. Our society still subsists, and the third volume of their Transactions is so far advanced, that it will certainly be published next season. Samuel Davis has translated the *Siurya Siddhanta*, and is making discoveries in Indian astronomy; while Wilford is pursuing his geographical enquiries at Benares, and has found, or thinks he has found, an account of Africa and Europe, and even of *Britain* by name, in the Scanda Puran; he has sent us a chart of the Nile from Sanscrit authorities, and I expect soon to receive his proofs and illustrations. Of public affairs in India, I say little, because I can say nothing with certainty: the seasons and elements have been adverse to

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us in Mysore. Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me to be with unfeigned regard, yours, &c.

LETTER CLXIII.

Sir William Jones to Lord Teignmouth.

My dear Sir,

A few days after I troubled you about the yacht, I felt a severe pang on hearing of your domestic misfortune; and I felt more for you than I should for most men, on so melancholy an occasion, because I well know the sensibility of your heart. The only topic of consolation happily presented itself to you: reason perhaps might convince us, that the death of a created being never happens without the will of the Creator, who governs this world by a special interposition of his providential care; but, as this is a truth which Revelation expressly teaches us, our only true comfort in affliction must be derived from Christian philosophy, which is so far from encouraging us to stifle our natural feelings, that even the divine Author of it wept on the death of a friend. This doctrine, though superfluous to you, is always present to my mind; and I shall have occasion in a few years, by the course of nature, to press it on the mind of Lady Jones, the great age of whose mother is one of my reasons for hoping most anxiously, that nothing may prevent her returning to England this season. * * * * I will follow her as soon as I can, possibly at the beginning of 1795, but probably not till the season after that; for although I shall have more than enough to supply all the wants of a man, who would rather have been Cincinnatus with his plough, than Lucullus with all his wealth, yet I wish to complete the system of Indian laws while I remain in India, because I wish to perform whatever I promise, with the least possible imperfection; and in so difficult a work doubts might arise, which the pundits alone could remove. You continue, I hope, to find the gardens healthy; nothing can be more pleasant than the house in which we live; but it might justly be called the temple of the winds, especially as it has an octagonal form, like that erected at Athens to those boisterous divinities. I cannot get rid of the rheumatism which their keen breath has given me, and submit with reluctance to the necessity of wrapping myself in shawls and flannel. We continue to be charmed with the perspicuity, moderation, and eloquence of Filangieri.

Of European politics I think as little as possible; not because they do not interest my heart, but because they give me too much pain. I have "good will "towards men, and wish peace on "earth;" but I see chiefly under the sun, the two classes of men whom Solomon describes, the oppressor and the oppressed. I have no fear in England of open despotism, nor of anarchy. I shall cultivate my fields and gardens, and think as little as possible of monarchs or oligarchs. I am, &c.

FROM THE LETTERS OF MR. RICHARDSON.

LETTER CLXIV.

Mr. Hill to Mr. Richardson.

June 1, 1730.

I thank you, dear Sir, for the very agreeable news that you begin to perceive yourself better, under effect of your troublesome regimen. Such a blessing is health, that we purchase it cheaply, at expence of more time and more torture, than, I hope, it is likely to cost you. The relation you send me, of your doctor's disinterestedness and generosity of behaviour, makes it reasonable to expect due success from his skill. For, whence ought we to look for capacity to be publicly useful, if not from minds that can give up their selfish attachments, and take others into their thoughts and their leisure?

It pleases me, but does not surprise me at all, that your sentiments concerning Milton's prose writings, agree with those I threw out, under influence of that back-handed inspiration, which his malevolent genius had filled me with, as I drew in the bad air of his pages. I know your good nature too well, to suspect it of esteem for an object so remotely unlike and unequal. One might venture on

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a very new use of two writers: I would pick out my friends and my enemies, by setting them to read *Milton* and *Cowley*. I might take it for granted, that I ought to be afraid of his *heart*, who, in the fame and popularity of the first, could lose sight of his malice and wickedness. And it could be running no hazard in friendship, to throw open one's breast to another, who, in contempt of the fashion we are fallen into, of decrying the works of the second, could have courage to declare himself charmed, by both the *muse* and the *man*, in that writer.

What you tell me concerning my *Cæsar*, gives me the pleasure you intended it *should*; but I receive it from a different quarter. It was your purpose to balance my chagrin at the inconsiderable effect of that essay, by representing it as obtaining *some* notice; whereas all the delight I enjoy from this generous artifice, is in my reflection on the view it arose from. For my part, I am *afraid* to be popular. I see so many who write to the living, and deserve not to live, that I content myself with a resurrection when dead. I very often remember, with pleasure, an old man (I am sure near a hundred), whom I rode by in a journey to Devonshire, and observed in the midst of a field, that had newly been plowed, very busy with a stick and a basket. When I came up to the place he was at work in, I found he was making holes in the ground, and in every one of them planting an acorn. Friend, said I, is it for *profit*, or *pleasure*, you labour?—For neither, Sir, replied the honest old patriot; *but here will be a grove when I want no shelter.*

Before I put an end to this letter, I must say a word or two concerning your postscript. You tell me you had given yourself up, for some days, to a state of indolence, at North-End. I like *leisure* extremely; but have a suspicion of that vapourish word, *indolence!* Whatever you do, encourage cheerful and lively ideas. If you give your distemper a vacuum, it will fill it with lassitude and anguish. I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXV.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, 1736.

I AM sorry to see that my fears, at the sight of your black wax, were too well grounded. Yet was it no little mitigation of my concern, that the blow was, near as it is, still no nearer you. I allow all the force of that tender affection you so beautifully feel and express for a mother. We have the double reasons of duty and gratitude, for the sorrow we pay to the loss of a parent: but we correct and set bounds to an affliction, so due and so naturally to be looked for. It is the regular measure of death, and he neither stretches his hand on one side, nor steps suddenly out of his road, when he reaches the fruit that is ripest. But it is very much otherwise, in the painful surprise of our anguish, when a wife is torn away from our heart, or a child from our hopes, in whose endearing society we had commission from the promise of time, to expect a long and delightful continuance. It is the disappointment, in this case, that enrages the bitterness: we repine not at the loss, as if unwillingly resigning ourselves to the common calamities of nature, but we are taken unprepared to consent; and consider, as a too early and unseasonable demand, such exaction of a debt, which, though we know to be due, we had too rashly concluded would never be so suddenly called for.

I hope it will not be long before I can have the pleasure of making you a visit, in your retirement at North-End; when (I think) I am sure I shall be able to shew you an easy and pleasant short way to get rid of that phthisical tendency. As for the good air in the places you mention, those bad qualities which such a concourse exposes them to, is undoubtedly such a troublesome balance, that good sense and good taste would avoid it. —I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CLXVI.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, April 13, 1741.

I SHOULD not be able to forgive myself for not writing to you so long, but that I can honestly plead in atonement, that I have never passed an hour without the pleasure of thinking of you. My daughters are newly returned from a long country ramble, whither they went with a kind of regret, as it postponed a delight which dwelt (and still dwells), in the uppermost view of their hope. And, indeed, the delay is, at present, rather my fault than theirs; or, to speak it more properly, it is the misfortune of us all; as arising from a good deal of vexatious concern I have been under, at some juvenile weaknesses in the conduct of ————, whom, I began to be afraid, I shall find quite incapable of the solid or serious turn of mind—whether in learning or business.

Well! these are troubles we are heirs to by nature, and we must receive them as part of our patrimony. Neither ought I, I think, to complain of my lot, while I have two, out of four, who are just what I wish them.

The two good girls above meant, are come home, quite filled and transported with the triumphs of Pamela; and, I think, in my conscience, they could not feel so much pleasure from a sense of their own, if they made any worth their desiring.

How does my dear Mr. Richardson do, and all his dear family? And how runs the growing renown of his name, in a great, wicked town, which his genius does honour to?—I am so hid among green leaves and blossoms, that I read or see nothing that busies the public, except now and then a few newspapers; but even from those I have the joy to discern the justice that is done to your Pamela; and the oblique reputation weaker writers endeavour to draw, from a distorted misuse of her name, for a passport to malice and faction.

You will find, by what I now send you, how sincerely I told you, that it hardly was possible to do what you have urged so repeatedly, so far as to change any thing but a word, here and there, in your beautiful work (for a work one may call this fine piece, with propriety, that is built for ages!)—Yet, as you so kindly and warmly insisted on the attempt, I, who love to consider your wishes as laws to my own inclination, took a late resolution to try how far it was practicable, if a man could go over your Pamela with the eye and the heart of a cynic, at one reading, and, in the next, with the vigilance of friendship—to pick out any thing that might not suffer by altering.

Upon the word of a friend and a gentleman, I found it not possible to go farther, without defacing and unpardonably injuring beauties, which neither I, nor any man in the world, but their author, could supply, with others as sweet and as natural;—If you conceive such an inspection of the rest worth your wishing, I will go through them all, with the same care and caution. I am, &c.

LETTER CLXVII.

Mr. Strahan to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, Aug. 17, 1749.

AFTER an agreeable, though somewhat fatiguing, journey of five days, we arrived safely at this place, where we found all friends as well as we expected. The alterations in persons, places, and things, since I was here last, struck me exceedingly, and afforded me the most convincing proof imaginable of the mutability of human affairs. Many people are strangely altered, many have disappeared, and many are now no more, which it is impossible to think of without concern, and a degree of seriousness not to be suddenly checked. Nay, so natural is it to be prejudiced in favour of the appearances things had when we were young, that even the alterations for the better please me not; at least, not till I have reasoned myself into the utility and propriety of the change.

I am like to be very well entertained while I stay here. There are sensible men in plenty; though such as Mr. R. are rarely found any where. I assure you the most valuable folks here like your writings best. You may, with great propriety, say, *exegi monumentum.*

There is nothing in this place worth writing you, only that there seems to be a great spirit of industry gone forth, which

which I am sure will turn to the advantage of both parts of the united kingdom.

I hope this will find you in perfect health, and happy in every sense. None merits every good thing better than you do; nor is there any person better qualified for the enjoyment of every rational pleasure. I hope your little girl is somewhat better, and that the rest continue perfect models of what young ladies should be. You will be so good to give my best respects to the valuable Mrs. Richardson; and to Mrs. Poole and Miss Dutton, whom, you know, you and I both love.

I remember your long-continued friendship for me with pleasure and gratitude. I admire your generosity, your benevolence, your sagacity, your penetration, your knowledge of human nature, and your good heart; I esteem you as my friend, my adviser, my pattern, and my benefactor; I love you as my father; and let me, even me also, call you my Nestor.

My wife and her mother bid me say every thing that is kind and respectful to you and Mrs. Richardson: shall we have the pleasure of hearing from you?—Mr. Hamilton will, no doubt, have occasion to trouble you now and then. I know you will not grudge giving him your best advice; whose every long day is filled with acts of benevolence to every body you know. I am, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXVIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, Aug. 24, 1749.

If I were to be long at a distance from you I fancy I should become as troublesome in writing, as you have experienced, to your cost, I have often been in talking to you, as every thing I see puts me in mind of you—What would Mr. Richardson think of this?—Here is room for his praise;—and here for his censure:—this would raise his compassion; this his indignation; this would touch his benevolent heart with joy; and here he would exercise his charity; this man's solid sense would delight him; the ladies would, in general, charm him; and the honest prejudices of many, in favour of their native country would make him smile. These, and many other such-like thoughts often occur to me, so that I am oftener in your company than you imagine. The civilities I daily meet with, and the hospitality with which I am entertained, are not to be expressed. I have nothing to do but go from feast to feast, the manners of the better part of this country bearing a very near resemblance to those of North End. I am overwhelmed with their kindness, so that I must really make my stay here as short as possible, lest living thus riotously should prejudice my health. But no more of this till I see you—a pleasure I truly long for.

At intervals, as I am now almost become a stranger to this country, and am possibly now taking my leave of it, I visit what is ancient or curious. Yesterday I paid my compliments to the remains of King James the Fifth, and shook Lord Darnley by the hand; he was Queen Mary's husband, you well know, and was seven foot eight inches in stature: a portly personage once, and now—what we must all be. O what a pleasing melancholy filled me on beholding their venerable remains. To see the very bodies of two such great men, who existed two centuries ago, is a curiosity indeed. They are in the chapel of Holyrood House, a very noble structure, but almost entirely demolished at the revolution, and since utterly neglected. Here monuments of men, like men, decay! But, however, the outside is firm, so that it may easily be repaired, when the government thinks proper.

What else I have seen, with my observations on every thing that occurs, will afford me matter of conversation with you, when my tongue, perhaps, would be more impertinently employed. I shall therefore say no more now. Suffer me only to take every occasion of making my sincere acknowledgments for your continued and uninterrupted kindness and friendship to me. When I think of particular instances of your goodness to me, all I can say to you upon that subject comes so very short of what I feel, that I do myself great injustice in endeavouring to say any thing at all. I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CLXIX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Sept. 2, 1749.

COULD you communicate to me a very small portion of your lively and creating fancy, my letters would be much more worthy of your perusal. The Israelites, who were obliged to make bricks without straw, were, in my opinion, in a much more tolerable situation than the man who is obliged to write without genius, because, though they had, indeed, no allowance of straw delivered out to them, they had the whole land of Egppt to glean it in; and as that, like Clarissa, was notoriously a most fruitful country, in which there were doubtless many delicious spots, they unquestionably found very pretty pickings in it.

Since my last, I have been at Glasgow, a town greatly altered for the better, in point of trade, since I was there last. Several large manufactories are set on foot, in which the poor of all ages, and both sexes, are usefully employed. From thence I went to Paisley, where Mr. Millar's father is minister, a venerable old man, who, like the church he preaches in, is nodding to his dissolution, but beautiful even in ruins. The town is almost entirely composed of manufacturers, and is in so exceeding thriving a way, that it is, they tell me, considerably increased even since last year when Mr. Millar was there. I returned thence to Stirling, and visited the castle, and went over the noble monuments of the amazing grandeur of our kings before the union of the crowns that are crumbling into dust. Here is a fine palace built by King James the Fifth, and a parliament-house, infinitely superior to that of Westminster. Here is a chapel also, purposely erected for the christening of Prince Henry, King Charles the First's eldest brother. Had he been preserved, who knows how things might now have been altered from what they are.—All these are hastening to decay, as no care is taken of any thing here except the fortifications. I had forgot to tell you, that the great church at Glasgow, and that noble structure at Paisley, are about 600 years old, and are most authentic proofs of the power of the church, or rather churchmen, in those days, who were able, in times of poverty and rudeness, to erect a variety of piles, any one of which would sensibly distress the whole kingdom, now, in its improved and flourishing state, to finish. On my return to Edinburgh, I passed by the ruins of the abbacy of Culross, part of which is now turned into a stable. The remains of gentlemen's houses, of long standing, occur every where; in which the builders have visibly studied strength and security, preferably to pleasure and conveniency. During this excursion, I was continually comparing past times with the present; the ancient glory of a prince, and a few noble families, supported at the expence of the lives of some, and the liberties of all the rest of the people, (who, the clergy excepted, laboured under the last degree of poverty, slavery, and ignorance) with the present economy of things, when our merchants are princes, and tradesmen enjoy the good things of the earth; when property may be acquired and safely enjoyed by the meanest labourer; and when superstition and ignorance can hardly find shelter in our meanest cottages. And yet, comfortable as this comparison is, the ruin of these ancient badges of our slavery, by reason of their splendour and magnificence, impresses me with a very deep concern.

I have insensibly spun out a long letter, without saying hardly any thing; and, least I tire you too much at once, I shall only add, at present, the assurances of my most perfect gratitude and esteem, being always, dear Sir, your's, &c.

LETTER CLXX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Edinburgh, Sept. 16, 1749.

WHEN I sit down to write to you, I present you before my eyes, with a smile of complacency overspreading your intelligent countenance, as if telling me, before I put pen to paper, that you expected to hear nothing new from me; but that's your fault, not mine. Had you been less assiduous in storing your mind with every sort of useful knowledge, you would yet have had something to learn. I have the pleasure of daily making new discoveries, which *you*, who have long ago travelled over the whole territo-

ries

ries of human nature, are already intimately acquainted with. In this respect I am happier than you.—"I am glad of "it, Mr. Strahan; I envy not your su- "perior ignorance, I assure you."

This moment I was going to say several bright things, which, as I am afraid I shall not be able to recollect again, I am sorry to tell you, you will probably lose for ever; but was interrupted by several people, who insist on my company, whether I will or no. I must therefore hasten to tell you, that I have had the pleasure and honour of your kind epistle; that my face, sleek as it is, I am very sensible will, in time, if it lasts, undergo a change, which I now neither hope for nor fear—that I hope I shall be able to tell you this, to *your face*, twenty years hence: that my wife says she loves you, as does also her old infirm mother; poor conquests you would say, if you were not Mr. Richardson:—that I have not yet seen Mrs. A——, but intend it soon: —that Mr. ——— — is in Ireland, from whom you need never expect any thing: —that ———— is in the North just now, but having got a good post, you will surely recover his money; please, therefore, send me down another copy of the bill, with a letter annexed, (directed to Mr. George Balfour, writer to the Signet in Edinburgh,) impowering him to receive it for you; this you will be so good as to do directly. I have spoke to him, and he will take particular care of it. Mr. Hamilton has franks to forward to town. That I am very greatly pleased Mr. Hamilton has your good opinion and approbation; he is full of your kindness in all his letters.

Allow me also, Sir, to acknowledge, (and I do it with the utmost sense of gratitude) the great honour you have done me, in admitting me to such a share of your conversation and friendship, which I have reason to value and be proud of on many accounts. You have indeed laid me under so many repeated obligations, and oblige too in so obliging a way, that I am afraid I must remain your poor insolvent debtor as long as I live: yet I will beg leave to say, that, if I do not deceive myself, I think I shall ever endeavour to pay all I can towards the interest of them, since the principal I am afraid I shall never be able to discharge. I know you may justly reproach me with neglecting one affair in particular you recommended to me; but I can with great truth say, it proceeds not from indolence, or any worse cause, but purely from an almost irresistible dislike to that sort of employment, which I really did not perceive in myself before, but which I am determined nevertheless to conquer.

I take this opportunity also to acquaint you, that my spouse was yesterday, between six and seven in the morning, safely delivered of a boy. She and I had long ago determined, if this child should be a male, to name it Samuel, after you; to make him, as it were, a living monument of your friendship; but without intention of putting you to expence, as I never make any formal christening. This, I hope, you will do me the honour to accept of.

I shall ever retain that just value and esteem for your singular humanity and goodness, which such a variety of amiable qualities never fail to command; and it shall always be my sincere wish, that you may enjoy a good state of health, to enable you to do all the good that is in your heart to do; that your young and promising family may exceed all your expectations of them; and that they, with Mrs. Richardson, (whose invincible honesty of heart, and unaffected love and veneration for you, must daily gain ground in the affections of a heart like your's) may all concur to make life serenely agreeable to you. I am, &c.

LETTER CLXXI.

Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, Welwyn, July 9, 1744.

My house is full of friends, that congratulate my return to life: 'till now I knew not that report had buried me. But I cannot but steal from them, to let you know (this first post) how truly sensible I am of your late goodness.

Caroline and I by no means forget the respects we owe in Salisbury-court: yet must I particularly insist that, when you go to North End, you let Cleopatra and Octavia know, that by their favour I was so happy, that in their company and so sweet a retirement, I thought, with Antony, the world well lost.

At present, I am pretty much engaged in the *Last Night*, and hope you are no less

less so in your undertaking. It will have many more readers than I can expect. And he that writes popularly and well, does most good; and he that does most good, is the best author.

Be not concerned about Lovelace: 'tis the likeness, not the morality, of a character we call for. A sign-post angel can by no means come into competition with the devils of Michael Angelo.

Heaven prosper you and your's. There are so many catching at you, and you are so unwilling to be caught, that I fear Wellwyn stands a bad chance. I am, &c.

LETTER CLXXII.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Wellwyn, Feb. 18th, 1745.

I HAVE been under some pain ever since I received the favour of your last, or so kind a letter should not have been so long without a reply. But pain I have been acquainted with before, and have endeavoured not to be dejected under it. An even mind, undejected by ill, unelated by good, is an advice the wise Heathens inculcated as much, if not more, than any other. Nor has Scripture shewn it less regard. No single piece of wisdom seems to me so strongly guarded there as this equanimity. Two noble barriers are erected against our deviation on either hand: one in the History of Solomon, who, to suppress elevation, assures us, that the best is vain; one in the History of Job, who tells us, the worst is supportable; which truth is the present. I return to the good woman, who favoured me with an ornament to my watch. There is a time when we should not only number *our* days, but our hours. Her present may stand my friend in this view: a measure of time is naturally an instrument of wisdom; but more so is the good example of a valuable and valued friend.

This moment I hear the knell of a young gentleman and neighbour, cut off in his bloom by the small-pox. 'Tis very near us: I am afraid for Caroline, to whose family it has been very fatal.

Dear Sir, &c.

P. S. As I was going to fold my letter, I heard a second knell. Asking whose it was, it proved my next neighbour's.—What has man to do but to know the vanity, and avoid the vexation, of human life? Evils fly so near and so thick about us, that I'm half persuaded, my dear friend, that we should aim at little more than negative good here, and positive in another scene. Escape here, and enjoyment hereafter.

LETTER CLXXIII.

The same to the same.

Bulstrode, Nov. 26, 1745.

My valued Friend,

AFTER a very wet journey above and below, I arrived at this family, to arrive at which one would be glad to go through some difficulties. Virtue, prudence, peace, industry, ingenuity, and amiableness, dwell here. You will say I keep very good company;—but you must know that anxiety has lately intruded, without the least invitation from folly or vice. The Duke* has a considerable estate in and about Carlisle, which must have suffered much; nor can they yet see to the end of the mischief. So that the common calamity makes more than a common impression here. God Almighty send us good news and good hearts.

I was a little struck at my first reading your list of evils in your last letter. Evils they are, but surmountable ones, and not only so, but actually by you surmounted, not more to the admiration, than the comfort, of all that know you. But granting them worse than they are, there is great difference between middle and *old age*. Hope is quartered on the middle of life, and fear on the latter end of it; and hope is ever inspiring pleasant dreams, and fear hideous ones.—And if any good arises beyond our hope, we have such a diffidence of its stay, that the apprehension of losing it destroys the pleasure of possessing it: it adds to our fears, rather than encreases our joys. What shall we do in this case? Help me to an expedient: there is but one that I know of, which is, that since the things of this life, from their mixture, repetition, defectiveness, and, in age, short duration, are unable to satisfy, we must aid their *natural* by a *moral* pleasure; we must

* Duke of Portland.

season them with a spice of religion, to make them more palatable, we must consider that 'tis God's will that we should be content and pleased with them: And thus the *thinness* of the *natural* pleasure, by our sense of joining an *obedience to Heaven* to it, will become much more *substantial*, and satisfactory.—We shall find great account in considering content, not only as a prudence, but as a *duty* oo.

Religion is all; and (happy for us!) it is all-sufficient too in our last extremities; a full proof of which I will steal from yourself. So all-sufficient is religion, that you could not draw, in Clarissa, the strongest object of pity, without giving us in it (thanks to her religion) an object of envy too.

Pray my love and service to all, and to Mr. Groves among the rest, who has lately much obliged, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXXIV.

Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson.

My dear Sir, July 17, 1746.

AFTER long absence, (long I mean to my feeling) I yesterday returned home, as to a pillow, which gives me that joy in rest, of which you will not be able to entertain any idea these twenty years.

You convince me, every day, more and more, of the singularity of your character; your heart is, I find, set on doing good offices, and to those who are least capable of returning them. If there is any such thing as virtue, it consists in such a conduct; and if there is any such thing as wisdom, it consists in virtue! What else can furnish either joy or peace? For when a man has had years, reflexion, and experience enough to take off the mask from men and things, it is impossible for him to propose to himself any true peace, but peace of conscience; or any real joy, but joy in the Holy Ghost. This, another might call preaching; but you, Sir, must either condemn the whole tenor of your life, or allow it to be common sense.

On his travels a very old man dines with me this day, the Rev. Mr. Watty, whose character may be briefly given by comparing him to a frosty night. There are many thoughts in him that glitter through the dominion of darkness. Though it is night, it is a star-light night; and if you (as you have promised) should succeed him in our little hemisphere, I should welcome Richardson as returning day.—In a word, I love you, and delight in your conversation, which permits me to think of something more than what I see! a favour which the conversation of very few others will indulge to, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXXV.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Wellwyn, Nov. 11, 1746.

I THANK you for enabling me, at my time of day, to think with great pleasure of living another year. A summer bearing such fruits as you kindly give me cause to expect, may excuse me for wishing to see longer days than we at present enjoy. I consider Clarissa as my last amour; I am as tender of her welfare, as I am sensible of her charms. This amour differs from all others in one respect—I should rejoice to have all the world my rivals in it.

The waters here are not new things; they were in great vogue fifty years ago; but an eminent physician of this place dying, by degrees they were forgot. We have a physician now near us who drinks them himself all the winter; and a lady comes seven miles every morning for the same purpose. They are the same as Tunbridge; and I myself have found from them just the same effect.

As to the melancholy part of your letter—our Chelsea friend; poor soul!—But God is good; and we know not what we pity. She is dead to us; she is in another state of existence. We are in the world of reason; she is in the kingdom of imagination: nor can we more judge of her happiness or misery, than we can judge of the joy or sorrow of a person that is asleep. The persons that sleep are, for a time, in the kingdom of imagination too; and she, as they, suffers or enjoys according to the nature of the dreams that prevail.

I heartily rejoice that at length you find benefit from your tar-water. Tar by winter, and steel by summer, are the two champions sent forth by Providence to encounter and subdue the spleen.

In

In long chronical cases, perseverance is the point; and so it is in the greatest point of all. No man is so profligate, but he is good for moments: perseverance only is wanting to make him a saint. As you persevere in the great point, persevere in this—to a good heart, add a good constitution; and then you are (only not an angel) as happy as mortality can admit.

I bless God, I am well: and I am composing, but it is in wood and stone; for I am building a steeple to my church; and as a wise man is every thing, I expect from you, as an architect, a critique upon it.

I had almost forgot to tell you, that an Irishman has run away with one of my neighbours, and that with such circumstances of intrigue and distress, that its truth alone hinders it from being an excellent romance: just as fiction alone hinders *your's* from being an excellent history.

You say, my dear friend, that I cannot but think. True!—But to live as one ought, requires constant, if not intense thinking. The shortness and uncertainty of life is so evident, that all take it for granted it wants no proof: and what follows? why this? because we cannot deny it, therefore we give it no attention; that is, we think not of it at all, for a very odd reason, viz. because we should think of nothing else. This is too strictly expressed, but very near the truth. Ask Cibber if he's of my opinion.

Mr. Prior cautions us about frauds in tar, which will defeat our expectations from it. He says it must be *Norway* tar of a *deep* brown, and pretty thin.

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXVI.

The same to the same.

Bath, Jan. 3, 1758.

My dearest Friend,

NUMBERLESS are your favours: Mr. and Mrs. Ditcher are to me extremely kind. I bless God, I at last find benefit from the waters, as to appetite, rest, and spirits. I have now for three nights had pretty good rest, after two sleepless months; and I believe that persevering in the waters is the point, at least in my complaint.

But at my time of day, how dare I to complain of small things, on the brink of the grave, and at the door of eternity! What a mercy that I am still here? What a fall have I seen around me: I was here twenty years ago; and scarce find one of the generation alive.

I rejoice, I greatly rejoice, to hear that you are better. Might not Bath be as much your friend as mine? In some points our cases are similar.

I think you told me in a letter that you once found benefit from it; if you could try again, I would attend you to your last hour.

But, say you, are you idle all this time? No, I am on a great work. How great a work is it to learn to die with safety and comfort? This is, as it should be, my business, unless I think it too much to spend my superannuated hours on that which ought to have been the business of my whole life.

I am now (as it is high time) *setting my house in order*—and therefore desire you to send by the carrier the *parcel of Sermons*, (which were packed up when I was in town) that I may commit them to the flames.

And please to favour me with my *full and long debt* to you; for I am in pain to have it discharged.

That the wing of an indulgent Providence may be ever stretched over you and your's, is the earnest prayer of,

Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXXVII.

Mr. Richardson to Dr. Young.

Jan. 1758.

Rev. and ever dear Sir,

I CONGRATULATE you with my whole heart on the good effect the waters have at last had on your health.

What may we not promise ourselves from so sound and good a constitution, from your regularity and temperance, and from the powers of *such* a mind invigorating the whole! A mind which can enjoy, and even enlarge itself, by that very sleeplessness which tears in pieces the health of others!

Our cases in some points are similar!

Ah, my dear and good Sir!—But that exercise, that journeying, which will contribute to your cure, I am unable to take. What a motive do you give me to make you a Bath visit, were I able!—But I hope on your return I shall not be deprived of the blessing of your company, and the favour of Mrs. Hallowes's, as was my request, by my daughter Pitcher. I have been often at Bath; but remember not that I received benefit from the waters. The late worthy Dr. Hartley once whispered me that I must not expect any.

"You are about a great work: "learn to die with safety and comfort." My dear Sir, you that have been so admirable a *teacher* of this very doctrine in your excellent *Night Thoughts*, must be more than a *learner*. You have not left to *superannuated hours* (which, I hope, if ever they come, are far, very far, distant) that great work. How comfortably, therefore, may you enjoy life, as well as contemplate the closing scene. Your, &c.

P. S. I am sorry that sleeplessness is your complaint. But when you sleep, you are awake to noble purpose. I, to none at all: my days are nothing but hours of dozings, for want of nightly rest, and through an impatience that I am ashamed of, because I cannot subdue it.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

Dr. Young to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, April 30, 1758.

I GRATEFULLY accept the kind offer you made me of being under your roof for some days, while I transact an affair in town. I shall be with you on Monday next, God willing; that God willing, who this moment has a thousand agents at work for my sake, of which I know nothing though they are all within me; and should any one of them cease to work, it would prove my instant death. —I mean the animal functions. Yet how merry should I make the world, should they hear me say, "If it please God, I "will rise from my seat;"—or, "I will "open my mouth;" or, "If it please "God, I will set pen to paper, &c." So ignorant are our wise ones of God and man.

With the utmost freedom of a true friend to truth, and to me, favour me with the full opinion of the *dedication* to my sermon; for I am, my dear Sir, somewhat uneasy till I can determine myself about it, and my own judgment is at a loss.

Is there any thing *mean* in what I say of *myself, and my long service at Court?*

Is there *impropriety*, or too *great length*, in what follows about the army?

Pray let me know your real sentiments. Or shall I take your silence as a tender way of your letting me know that you disapprove? Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXIX.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, Sept. 8, 1760.

I HAVE received the papers: and how greatly am I concerned that I cannot take the advantage of the infinite pains you have taken for me; but every day puts it more and more out of my power.

Pray my humble duty to the Speaker, and tell him that I greatly enjoy his so kind remembrance of me; and long to kiss his hand.

I find little assistance from art; but my complaint itself, in one view, is an excellent *glass*, making things invisible more legible than they were before.

It is with difficulty that I can read what your friendship, and genius, and virtue, has sent me: but still greater difficulty am I under sufficiently to thank you for it. To write is uneasy to me: must I despair of ever seeing you? or have I that pleasure in life still to come? —Success and peace be ever with you!

Amen,

which is the natural style of those that have entered the intermediate state between this scene and the next: a dim apartment it is, which excludes action, but favours thought. Heaven be favourable to Miss Patty's health.

LETTER CLXXX.

Miss Fielding to Mr. Richardson.

Sir, Jan. 8th, 1748—9.

You cannot imagine the pleasure Miss Collier and I enjoyed at the receipt of your kind epistles. We were at dinner with a *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc* man, who said, well, I do wonder Mr. Richardson will be troubled with such *silly women*; on which we thought to ourselves (though we did not care to say it) if Mr. Richardson will bear us, and not think us impertinent in pursuing the pleasure of his correspondence, we don't care in how many languages you fancy you despise us; not but we know you do love and like us too, say what you will to the contrary.

'Tis but a sham quarrel between you and your pen; for had it been real, I flatter myself, that, knowing how delighted, how overjoyed, I should have been, with making your pen my master, you would have solicited him to have admitted me as his servant. Humble and faithful would I have been; I would have obeyed his call; his hours, though six, or even five, in the morning, should have been mine. Indeed, what is there I would not have done? Pleasantly surprised should I have been, suddenly to have found all my thoughts strengthened, and my words flow into an easy and nervous style: never did I so much wish for it as in this daring attempt of mentioning Clarissa: but when I read of her, I am all sensation; my heart glows; I am overwhelmed; my only vent is tears; and unless tears could mark my thoughts as legibly as ink, I cannot speak half I feel. I become like the Harlowes' servant, when he spoke not; he could not speak; he looked, he bowed, and withdrew. In short, Sir, no pen but your's can do justice to Clarissa. Often have I reflected on my own vanity in daring but to touch the hem of her garment; and your excuse for both what I have done, and what I have not done, is all the hopes of, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXI.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Doctors Commons, 12th April, 1749.

Dear Sir,

I RET[illegible] you my thanks for the play you sent me; and by what I have read of it, I think Mr. Garrick is very much obliged to the author for shewing the world how much he was in the right for refusing it. I thought to have called upon you this morning, but cannot; nor do I believe that I shall see you, unless your kind intentions should lead you this way, before you go to North End. Mr. Harris was telling me the other day, that he heard your sweet girl most unmercifully condemned for not marrying Lovelace at St. Alban's. "She should (said "the lady who blamed her) have laid "aside all delicacy; and if Lovelace had "not asked her in the manner she wish-"ed, she ought to have asked him." And more things of the same kind she ran on with; but, at last, closed all with saying, "In short, Lovelace is a charm-"ing young fellow, and I own I like him "excessively."

You know I love to tell you every thing I hear concerning your Clarissa, or otherwise I should not furnish you with more instances of what you have reason to say you too often meet with; namely, the fondness most women have for the character of Lovelace. It vexes me so much when I hear of people talking in such a manner, that I cannot help attempting something like an answer; but the best answer to the present criticism is, to give you the history and character of the lady who so ingenuously avowed her fondness for Lovelace. This lady is a person of very high rank, and therefore you must excuse my naming names. She lived as a mistress with a man for many years, and proved herself to have done so in a court of justice, in order to recover some money for a child she had by that very man. She then went into keeping with a noble lord (now her husband) and after having lived with him some years, she prevailed with him to marry her, by shewing him the *meekness* of her spirit, and the *gentleness* of her passions: for (besides being frequently in fits and sometimes in the most violent passions of rage) she once attempted to

take laudanum to destroy herself; and, being prevented, she another time hanged herself, just as she knew he was coming up stairs; which last stratagem gained her ends: and now she is a woman of quality, and a woman of taste, and a perfect judge of delicacy, as appears by the before mentioned criticism. I wonder whether her husband ever read your books, and whether he attended to your description of Belton, and his Thomasine!

If I should not have the pleasure of seeing you before you go out of town, I beg my compliments to Mrs. Richardson; and believe me, dear Sir, &c.

LETTER CLXXXII.

Miss Fielding to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, July 6, 1754.

VERY many excuses could I make for not writing to you before; but silence sometimes proceeds from a consciousness of not being able to say enough on the principal subject uppermost in our thoughts; and yet finding it difficult to discharge that subject, and make room for any other, as I remember once to have heard a gentleman say, that he had observed, that when ladies were asked to give a toast, they generally hesitated a good while, which time they employed in drawing the name they liked best from their memory, to make room for some other to whom they were perfectly indifferent.

A sister Indolence, Miss L—, was so kind to sit with me yesterday in the afternoon, and desired me to say something in mitigation of her omission of the same kind; to which I answered, I could not be a proper pleader in her behalf, but would leave it to the ruler of Sir Charles Grandison's mind to find excuses for the meek-hearted.

Your kind friendship will be pleased with my telling you that the waters agree so well with me, that I hope in time they will work as perfect a cure from diseases as an old woman can expect. Here are a set of young women endued with the most exemplary patience I ever met with; for Miss L— and Miss B— agreed to read Sir Charles Grandison together, and really waited from time to time till they could meet, each honourably performing their covenant, and not so much as taking one unlawful peep in the absence of the other. Patient Grizzle, I find, is no unnatural fable. I assure you, Sir Charles, notwithstanding you have bestowed him on Miss Byron, is so great a favourite with the ladies, that I know a young woman of quality who is deservedly the object of public admiration, and yet has absented herself from all her admirers several evenings, and chosen a perfect retirement with Sir Charles; but I think she likes lady G— too well: why should her wit and liveliness excuse her insolence? Even Lovelace had wit and liveliness, remember! You could make him agreeable whenever we were not reading his heart. It is true there is a sort of reformation in lady G—; but I am afraid her husband will never be convinced that she don't despise him. I am, &c.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, June 26, 1755.

I WAS in town two days. I sought you out, but you was no where to be found; for you were gone to Parson's Green, from whence, Monday se'nnight, I ran away, being frightened with a pain in my stomach, which put me in mind of an old story of a lady, whose friend said she was very rude and uncivil to go a visiting to her friend, and die whilst she was there.

My love to Mrs. Richardson, and all who have the happiness to be under your roof.

To live in a family where there is but one heart, and as many good strong heads as persons, and to have a place in that enlarged single heart, is such a state of happiness as I cannot hear of without feeling the utmost pleasure. Methinks, in such a house, each word that is uttered must sink into the hearer's mind, as the kindly falling showers in April sink into the teeming earth, and enlarge and ripen every idea, as those friendly drops do the new sown grain, or the water-wanting plant. There is nothing in all the works of nature or of art too trifling to give pleasure, where there is such a capacity to enjoy it, as must be found in such an union. Give

me

me leave, dear Sir, to return your pleasingly cordial expression, and to say I am, with unabated affection, ever your's, &c.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, Ryde, Oct. 3, 1755.

I HAVE delayed answering the kind favour of your's, in hopes I should have seen more of the island, which my good Mrs. Roberts proposed to have shewn me; but the weather has been so very cold and comfortless here, that we have not had fine days enough successively to make the pleasant expedition we have intended: if we could have gone, I would have done my best to have given you a description of the views and pretty things I had seen; but I met with some lines the other day in a translation of a famous Italian poet, which in a few expressive words, gives a better account of this sweet country, than I could in a hundred:

She wishes much to tarry in this land
That hath both fruitful earth, and pleasant air,
And fountains sweet, and woods on ev'ry hand,
And meadows green, and pastures fresh and fair;
Beside large hav'ns, where ships at ease may stand,
To which the merchants often make repair,
By tempest driven, well loaden with good traffick,
Of things that come from Egypt and from Africk.

This poem was the only book of amusement I brought with me; it is called Ariosto; or, Orlando Furioso, and is, in its way, a most wonderful piece of imagination, and really a very extraordinary work. My good friends at Appley are so kind to supply me with books when I am absent from them at my little cottage, which is not so often as to read a great deal. I am so apprehensive, now the weather grows cold, that I shall soon lose dear Mrs. Roberts, and her amiable daughters, that I am as much with them as possible whilst I can have them so near me; and their frequent society is what I fear I shall greatly miss when they go to London: yet for the sort of people in the low station my old folks are in, I hardly ever met with more simplicity and good sense than they both have, and it is with some degree of pleasure that I sit in an evening with them, and hear the discourse and gossippings of the day; it makes me smile often, and sometimes rises to a downright laugh; and whatever promotes and causes this, with innocence and good humour, is as eligible (as far as I know, in the way of conversation) and as worthy to be ranked of the sort called delightful and pleasing, as in the routs and hurricanes of the great, or at court, or even in company with my Lord Chesterfield. I am acquainted with few others in this village besides my old folks; but endeavour to get a speaking and how d'ye kind of knowledge of them all as I meet them, and I hear by this behaviour I have acquired the title amongst them of "a civil gentlewoman," and "a very civil gentlewoman" many of them say; the children bow and curtsey down to the ground, and whisper and jog each other when I am coming, crying, "here is the gentlewoman coming;" this is homage and respect enough to gratify all the vanity and ambition I have now left, I think, sufficiently. Mrs. Roberts says, when she sees me in my very poor house, sitting on my earthen floor, eating my dinner out of a platter, and my poor bed-chamber without any door to it, and a little window peeping out from under the thatch, bare walls, and every thing suitably poor, that under this humble roof I can have no proud thoughts, but must have killed every grain of worldly pride and vanity, before I could sit down contented in such a place. I was forced to make a great slaughter and lay about me prodigiously, before I could conquer those bitter enemies to peace and humility called passions; but now I think and hope they all lie dead in heaps at several places in London and elsewhere; and I brought down nothing with me but a bundle of mortifications; or, to speak more seriously, a thorough and humble acquiescence to the Divine will, and an earnest desire, with patience, resignation, and serenity of mind, to work out my salvation as soon as it will please God to release me; perhaps a little impatience still remains, which tempts me to add "the sooner the better;" and Madame Maintenon's words, in a letter of her's, occur to me, where she says, "It is high time to die; why should I stay any longer in this world? I have

" nothing to do in it; and it is gene-
" rally business and ambitious views,
" that make us fond of staying here."

I was sadly vexed, at my first coming, at a report which had prevailed here, of my being the author of Mr. Fielding's last work, "The Voyage to Lisbon:" the reason which was given for supposing it mine, was to the last degree mortifying, (viz. that it was so very bad a performance, and fell so far short of his other works, it must needs be the person *with him* who wrote it). This is the disadvantageous light poor women are held in, by the ill-nature of the world. If they write well, and very ingeniously, and have a brother, then to be sure—" She could not write so well; it was " her brother's, no doubt." If a man falls short of what is expected from his former genius in writing, and publishes a very dull and unentertaining piece, then " to be sure it was his sister, or some " woman friend, who was with him." Alas! my good Mr. Richardson, is not this a hard case?—To you I appeal, as the only candid man, I believe, with regard to women's understandings; and indeed their only champion, and protector, I may say, in your writings; for you write of angels, instead of women.

Admiral Byng and Admiral Hawke now lye at Spithead; the latter brought in many French prizes with the fleet.

I heard there was a wreck of a West Indiaman, on the south side of the island, last Friday (but the crew saved) laden with sugar.—Poor souls, it was a great distress the getting on shore, and being plundered, as in all likelihood they were. Had they been drowned, I think I should not have been so sorry; for I pity nobody that dies: I pity those left behind. Oh, that I had died for thee, my dearest friend and sister! but it was not permitted me. Excuse me this sudden gust of grief: I should not, dare not, trust myself to write on this afflicting and tender subject; it makes me incapable, from want of eyes, to add more than my kindest and best respects to dear Mrs. Richardson, and the Miss Richardsons, to beg the continuance of your friendship, dear Sir, and that you would believe me to be, with the highest esteem, your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXV.

Mr. Richardson to Miss M. Collier.

Dec. 24, 1755.

If my dear Miss Collier knew how much I have been immersed in bricks, mortar, plasterers' and carpenters' work all the summer, and till within this month past, and in that month wholly engrossed by the removal of all my printing materials into the new building, she will think the less hardly of my long silence to a letter that I admire in every line of it.

Do not let this silence deprive me of the description you intended to give me of the views, prospects, situations that were to offer to you in the excursions you were to make with your hospitable friend, Mrs. Roberts, and her amiable daughters.

Alas! they have left you, I doubt! How are you now? Who have you to associate with when you carry yourself out of that happy circle? Happy it must be; your ambition trodden under foot—your passions calmed. What a happy creature must you be in these conquests, in your lot, even as you describe it; though it would draw a tear from the eyes of readers less subdued. Your old couple, methinks I love them. I *must*, if they remain kind to you. Sweetly do you describe the power your amiable affability has given you over the affections of the children in your neighbourhood—The gentlewoman, my dear Miss Collier.—The honest villagers distinguish well: you are indeed *the gentlewoman*, and, what is far greater, *the Christian!* I always loved you; but never so well as since I have had the favour of your last letter. How often have I determined to sit down to answer it, and to tell you all I thought of it and you, in the time of this long silence.

You regret, my dear Miss Collier, the hard fate of women of genius in being denied the merit of their own works, when well received, and in having them attributed to their brothers and other men friends, &c. But think you not that this is a great deal owing to your own sex, who (the capable ones I mean) hide their talents in a napkin, and are afraid, lovely dastards, of shewing themselves capable of the perfections they are mistresses of?—It is well I have not the

punishing

punishing of such *degraders* of their own sex, so I was going to call them; for do they not, by their wilful and studious concealments of the gifts God has blessed them with, confess, at least indirectly, an inferiority to the other? What is it they fear in asserting themselves with modesty, and when occasionally called forth? Is it that the men will be afraid of them, and shun them as wives? Unworthy fear! Let the wretches shun and be afraid of them. Unworthy of such blessings, let such men not dare to look up to merits so superior to their own; and let them enter into contract with women, whose sense is as diminutive as their own souls. What loss would a woman of high attainments and of genius have, in a man of a character so low, as to be afraid of the perfections of the woman who would give him the honour of calling her his!

I was not a little pleased to hear that you kept up a correspondence with so excellent a woman as Mrs. Berthon is described to be by my good friend Mrs. Watts. Miss Lodwich, another admirable lady. But who can forbear being extremely anxious for them, and for many others, among the multitudes that have perished in the most tremendous catastrophe of Lisbon? What a dreadful dispensation!

Some impatience, in my dear Miss Collier, seems still remaining to be conquered; and *when* that can be done, and a thorough reliance made on the Divine goodness, so as neither to covet life, nor to wish for death, but to wait the appointed time with cheerfulness—Who will be so happy as my dear friend in the Isle of Wight?

But what shall we do for a door to your apartment this cold weather? Cannot you find a way to draw upon me, payable at sight, for five guineas? Oblige me, my dear Miss Collier, in the grant of this request.—The promissory note I annex.*

My wife and girls most particularly desire their best wishes to be wafted to you.

Once more excuse my long silence; and believe me to be, with great truth,

Your, &c.

* A note for five guineas.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

The same to the same.

London, Jan. 5, 1756.

I am sorry my dear Miss Collier had the thought of returning the note she mentions, unused. Give me not, Madam, that mortification. I hope you will not, and in that hope, will say no more on the subject.

The Miss B—'s! True, my dear; they are among the dastards I had in my head, when I inveighed *so vehemently*, you say, against the geniusses of your sex, who studiously in many inexplicable plaits, wrap up their napkin'd talents. "Punish them." I wish it were in my power. How do you think it should be, for the first fault, on conviction? Why, to banish them for three months to Ryde, in the Isle of Wight—Miss Collier to be the inflictor, and the example too, of all *human* divestments (allow me the odd expression) for that space of time.

But think you, my good Miss Collier, that this elaborate concealment of *God-given* talents, is an *honest* one? Would these girls put a cheat upon some little-minded creatures, who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives, as would do them credit? Would they break upon them, when they could not help themselves, and *astun* them with a superiority of good sense? Rather let me ask, would such girls be afraid that such men would slight them were they to unplait their napkins? Would they condescend to join hands with men *capable* of slighting them for the excellencies they gave not to themselves? Can you, who read Ariosto, help thinking that you see, on such an idea as this will raise, a lady possessed of the shield of Ruggiero, uncovering it, by surprise, and darting radiant glory in the face of her husband; the Caitiff, as in one of the cuts of Harrington's translation, sprawling, dazzled at her feet?

You honour me with the noble title of a vindicator of your sex; but let me desire you to whisper in the ears of the ladies you mention—"Who, my dears, "shall vindicate the honour of a sex, "the most excellent of which desert "themselves?"—Don't mind their blushing looks at one another by turns:—

whisper

whisper over again the question, till they are determined to amend; *or*—what *or*?—Be sent to the Isle of Wight. No severe punishment, neither, I hope!—the complicated fault considered.

Mrs. Berthon and family, I have the pleasure of telling you, are safe in their persons. Mr. Millar has a letter from Mr. W.—I have not seen it. That gentleman was almost miraculously saved. Terribly extensive indeed has been this earthquake! God Almighty preserve us from the effects of these terraqueous convulsions! Were we to persuade ourselves that they are sent as judgments, what have not we of this kingdom to fear?

Your poor frantic girl, perhaps, thought she was avoiding the evil to come, and which she had prophesied would come, when she sought her death in the water. There have been unhappy people, more in their senses than she seems to have been, who have thrown themselves into the arms of death, for fear of dying. This girl must have been earthquake-mad, as well as otherwise delirious. Don't you think so?

My wife, my girls, desire their particular respects to you, and join with me in wishing the begun year may be the happiest you have ever known. In the enviable frame of mind you are in, it must be so.

God bless you! adieu! and adieu, my dear Miss Collier!

LETTER CLXXXVII.

Miss Collier to Mr. Richardson.

Feb. 11, 1756.

I AM much of your opinion, dear Sir, as to the dishonesty of those girls who studiously conceal, in many inexplicable plaits (as you say) the glorious talents bestowed on them. I wish they had courage to assert themselves before marriage, and *astun the Caitiff's vile*, in order to get rid of them; for I think, should they fall prostrate and sprawling before the dazzling shield of the lady, it would be a properer and more becoming posture for a lover, than a husband; besides it would be highly dishonest in such surpassing genusses to marry men of inferior understandings in another light than that of deceiving; for ought not the power and government to rest with those who have the superiority of judgment and wisdom? And who would be so base and wanting to her own worth, as voluntarily to enter into a state of submission and acquiescence to the will of a person less qualified to govern than herself;—when this would be to enter into a state of the vilest servitude, and the only one truly so called; as the divine Milton describes it, where he says,

"It is not servitude to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is *servitude*,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier."———

You say (and truly) that there are little-minded creatures who would be afraid of such talents in their respective wives as would outshine themselves.—And again, ask if such girls would be afraid that *such men* should slight them? Why, no, surely.—But O! Mr. Richardson (with a deep sigh I say it) that I never had heard men of real good sense, great parts, and many fine qualities, lower themselves down to these little-minded creatures, in inveighing with warmth against an uncommon share of understanding in a wife; and shewing but too plainly in their practice, when they come to marry, that they are as much afraid of a rivalship of understanding in their wives, as those men you mention.—Indeed, indeed, Sir, I have heard and seen this in men of unquestionable good sense!—Where then shall we find husbands for our dear uncommon genusses of girls?—Are not they under a kind of necessity (if they ever intend to marry) to continue their napkins in plaits before marriage, nor ever dare to unfold them, even after marriage, to the generality of men, except they could meet with a noble-minded Sir Charles Grandison, or such as have grace enough to endeavour to tread in his steps.

I have a mixture of joy and tender concern in the account you give me of my friends at Lisbon, and from what I have heard from others. They are safe in their persons, it seems; but poor Mr. St—bs and family have lost every shilling they had in the world, it's said. Dear!—What a trying circumstance is this to people in great affluence as they were.

were. I pray God support and comfort them under this heavy affliction: they are worthy good people, and I hope they will find friends to assist them.

My good old folks—you can't think how I love them!—the more I believe, because they hearken with such attention and admiration to Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, which latter I have now begun to them. They believe both Clarissa and Sir Charles to be real stories, and no work of imagination, and I don't care to undeceive them. The good man is more than threescore, he believes; but quite alive, and has none of the infirmities of age. She has one of the most agreeable and placid countenances I ever saw. They love each other, and the husband rejoices in the balance of sense being of her side, which it is, in some degree, and glories in her being able to read and write, which he can scarcely do. I can't quit my old folks without expressing my happiness in them, and gratitude to all my kind friends, who put it in my power, by the help my little pittance is to them, to afford them more of the necessaries and comforts of life than they enjoyed before I came.

In short, my good Gaffer and his wife, I believe, are just such good old folks as Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, in Pamela.

Compliments to dear Mrs. Richardson; and believe me to be, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

The same to the same.

Ryde, Feb. 4, 1757.

IMPUTE it not to disrespect, my dear good Mr. Richardson, that I have not before wrote to you; neither was it laziness; but in truth to a consciousness, that I had really nothing worth your attending to in my head to commit to paper.

I found my good folks but very indifferent in their healths; but I thank God they are pure well now, and so am I, notwithstanding this bitter cold north-east wind and excessive hard frosts for this ten days past. I sit wholly at home this sharp weather, and grow fonder and fonder of retirement the more I indulge myself in it; there is nothing I reflect on with more thankfulness than the pleasure I am capable of taking in reading, writing, music, and other amusements, which I trust are innocent, if not laudable; for since it is my lot to live so much alone, how miserable should I be if reading grew tiresome, or other employments of the mind were not pleasing to me; since the several ways of *killing* time amongst the generality of women, namely, in visits, diversions, or cards, are entirely cut off from my way of life, as much almost, as from any recluse in a nunnery. Sometimes, for a fortnight together, I do not see a soul but those within our walls, my dear good old souls, who are so happy in each other, and so continually cheerful in an evening when I see them, that I might well learn of them that good lesson of contentedness, which is none of the least of Christian virtues; and indeed many other virtues might I learn of them; for the more I see and know of them, the more I love them, hitherto. Their business begins to fail and fall off (as it often happens with old people, and young ones supplant them with their customers); this grieves and vexes me more than to appearance it does them; for they express no impatient repinings, nor the least degree of bitterness, at old friends and customers leaving them, without any fault of theirs but growing old; nor are they at all envious at the young ones that have insinuated themselves into their business: this I love them for, and admire them, as doubting, in myself, whether they are not my superiors in this respect.

Here are great complaints amongst the poor, at the dearness of corn, as well as in other parts of England; and every thing, this war time, is also dearer here than it was ever known in the memory of the oldest people in the Isle of Wight. God grant we may soon have a peace!

I am, &c

LETTER CLXXXIX.

Mrs. Pilkington to Mr. Richardson.

King-street, Westminster, June 1743.

Sir,

THE sin of ingratitude would lie heavy on me, did I not, with the most perfect thankfulness, acknowledge your goodness. Every favour you confer receives a ten-fold value from your manner of conferring

conferring it; and as they are at least not bestowed on an insensible heart, I hope you will indulge me so far, as that without offending you, I may acquaint you with the sentiments of it.

Give me leave then to inform you, that the cruel treatment I have received from numbers of those falsely styled virtuous, has made me fearful of applying to any of them (but such to whom my misfortunes were entirely unknown); for instead of the relief my calamities required, they were heightened by some bitter insult; and the best comfort I received, was to be informed, I deserved all that I could suffer here. It was consequently with dread I addressed even the Doctor D—y; for although I had long been a witness to his humanity to others, I was not sure but I might have been so misrepresented to him, as to persuade him I was unworthy of it. You may judge then, Sir, when I found my letter, and his answer, in your hand, how much I was startled; for being a stranger to you, I know not what proofs you would require as to the sincerity of my reformation. But how agreeably was I surprised, when, instead of an awful severe judge, I met with a gentleman truly polite and compassionate! I know, Sir, I am entirely indebted to you for the Doctor's bounty, both as you have run the hazard of advancing it, been an intercessor for me to him, and encreased my store by your own charity. Such worthy minds as your's reclaim the fallen sinner, smoothing the thorny paths of virtue, and making them appear all beauty, peace, and pleasure.

It would now seem quite unreasonable to make a farther request to you; yet I have it so much at heart, that I must entreat you to comply with it. 'Tis that you will continue to me the happiness of your acquaintance:—'tis so desirable a blessing, that I am anxious to preserve it; and blessings are dealt to me with so sparing a hand, so very few I possess, that I am certain you will not deprive me of the chief.—That they may be abundantly multiplied to you, and your's, is the sincere wish of, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXC.

The same to the same.

Dear Sir, March 13, 1744—5.

I DID not till this moment open the paper you were so kind to send me, my eyes being so sore for want of sleep, that I was afraid to write. But how was I astonished to find you, like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft the lonely heart with good, and bounty unexpected, unmerited, unsought!

What can I pay thee for this noble usage, but grateful praise; so Heaven itself is paid: and you, truly made in the image of God, will, I hope, accept of the low, but sincere oblation, of a thankful spirit.

But pray, Sir, why will you differ so much from the generality of mankind?—A proud

Unfeeling race! whose breasts ne'er learnt to glow
For others' good, or bleed for other's woe.

You have monopolised all the Christian, all the social virtues and graces to yourself. Sir, is this equitable; is it fair? I wish the House of Lords, especially the Lords Spiritual, would take it into their serious consideration; for the day I had the honour to write to you, I had the mortification to write to the Lord Almoner, who, by his title, ought to have a little charity, and to whom I was strongly recommended, both by his Grace of York, and Doctor Hales, last year, for the King's bounty; and in hopes of gaining his favour, I also presented him with a very curious piece of work; but all this produced nothing but a very great insult; for though I wrote in the most humble and pathetic terms I was mistress of, or his pride could desire, he sent out my letter in a minute's time, torn to pieces, to my servant, with this comfortable message, that he would never do me any good; and I verily believe him. But surely this disgraced himself more than me, plainly proving he knew not what belonged to his station, either as a gentleman or a prelate.

'Tis a remark of Doctor Swift's, that persons are resentful in the same measure that they are grateful; to the truth of this observation my heart bears witness; for perhaps no human creature possesses either

either of those passions in a more eminent degree than myself. Resentment, indeed, I endeavour to subdue; because it hurts only myself, by which you may perceive I am spiteful, though impotent; yet who can be touched to the quick, and not feel? Gratitude is a generous laudable passion, the offspring of an enlarged mind; yet 'tis with me somewhat too intense, and like what the poets dream of the joys of love, winds me up even to a painful height of ecstacy; and when I reflect, that I have no power in any degree to return the favours I have received from you, Sir, more, abundantly more, than from any person living, my spirits quite sink beneath the sense I have of my obligations.

My little faithful Irishwoman offers up all her Ave-maria's and Paternoster's for your prosperity. Your, &c.

LETTER CXCI.

The same to the same.

Westminster, May 27, 1745.

Dear Sir,

I HAD the pleasure of passing four hours on Saturday with Mr. Cibber, who is just returned from Bath, and is, thank God! in pure health and admirable spirits. He has given me his commands to present his respects to you, and tell you, he thirsts for your writings, that is his word, and hopes you will give him a morning; and I hope as he has given me leave to be of the party, it will not be displeasing to you, insomuch as I promise not to mention my unspeakable obligations to you before your face.

Spirits who are not finely touched like yours, can scarce stretch their narrow minds to conceive a disinterested generous action; relate it, and they shall rack their inventions to find some flaw in it. I dare say you would meet with more censure, than applause, for bestowing any favour on one who so little merits it, according to the general opinion; but you have dealt with me according to Hamlet's advice:—Use every man better than his deserts, or who shall escape a whipping? Believe me to be, with such respect as we pay to superior beings, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCII.

Mrs. Pilkington to Colley Cibber, Esq.

Dublin, June 18, 1747.

My dear, dear Sir,

I DOUBT not but you will be surprised to receive a letter from the land of fogs and fens; but as you have for many years been the kind preserver of my life, I think it an indispensable duty on me both to pay you the utmost acknowledgments of a grateful heart, and also to acquaint you by what means I came to revisit my native country, where I have made every body as much in love with your humanity, as they are charmed with your Cicero, which is now here, and so often borrowed from me by persons of taste and eminence, that I can scarcely call the book mine. I have, for its preservation, got it handsomely bound: and must beg you will send me a copy of your Countenance, to prefix to it.

A short time after I had the honour of seeing you, a well-natured prelate arrived from Ireland He had been an intimate friend to me; and, upon acquainting him what cruel treatment Mr. Pilkington had given both to his children and me, and that I had no means of redress but crossing the water, he generously sent me sixteen guineas, with which I cloathed myself decently, and arrived here just time enough to prevent my husband's second marriage; who, to his unspeakable mortification, stands condemned to pay me seventy pounds. My Memoirs are in the press, and subscriptions pouring in from all quarters: so that, when I have the happiness of seeing you again (as I trust in God I shall) your generous heart, which has so often sympathized with my sorrows, will, I know, rejoice, that they are at an end.

The indulgence your goodness has ever afforded me, make me hope you will pardon this liberty; and also make me happy by an answer. Give me, I beg you, a particular account of your health and spirits: God preserve them to you.

I do assure you, Sir, the honour you have shewn me, makes me looked upon as a person of consequence here. I entertain my friends in the same manner I have had the honour of amusing you, with a particular account of Dr. Swift: and if either prose or verse

——————— can give
A deathless name, thine shall for ever live.

This village affords not any news worth writing. I am the chief subject of discourse here, my adventures being impatiently expected: and I think I cannot give you a more contemptible idea of the place, than tha. so inconsiderable a creature should furnish the tea-tables with chat. Mr. Victor presents his respects to you. I must beg you will make mine acceptable to the worthy Mr. Richardson, and that you will believe me to be, with love, gratitude, and truth, my dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CXCIII.

Colley Cibber to Mr. Richardson.

Wednesday Morn, March 30, 1748.

Sir,

Is it possible? How could an author, so snubbed, and disappointed of approbation as you have been from me, ever recover into such spirit? Lovelace's sixth letter, p. 52,* has thrown out such lively strokes of his uncommon, and yet natural character, such almost justifiable sentiments of his intended treatment of Clarissa, that scarce a libertine reader will forbear to triumph with him, over the too charming, and provoking delicacy of his Clarissa. I am in the same rapture with Miss Howe's reply to her narrative, p. 60.† I have not patience to dwell on its particular parts, that have seized upon my approbation. I am afraid of talking nonsense upon it. Would you were here while I am reading! I could not help saying thus much, before I come to something, which I confess I am in apprehension of meeting with to displease me. The Lord grant I may be disappointed!

I have got through 210 pages,‡ with a continual resolution to give every occasional beauty its laudable remark; but they grow too thick and strong upon me, to give me that agreeable leisure. I read a course of full five hours and a half, without drawing bit (as the jockeys call it); in which time my attention has got the better of my approbation, which all the while longed to tell you how I liked it. But hold, said I, be quiet, and (as Congreve says) while the lady is singing,

Let all saucy praise be dumb!

And yet it is impossible any longer to contain. Miss Howe's expostulatory letter (p. 213) wherein she sets her own, and her friend's differently amiable temper, in the most lively light, must charm every sensible heart that reads them. O Lord! Lord! can there be any thing yet to come that will trouble this smooth stream of pleasure that I am bathing in. But the book again lies open for me.—I have just finished this letter of Miss Howe's; with that charming chicken's neck at the end of it. What a mixture of lively humour, good sense, and wanton wilfulness, does she conclude it with! How will you be able to support this spirit? In Clarissa's following letter you have, with admirable art, removed the objection of Clarissa's not having followed Miss Howe's advice not to delay any moment in her power to marry Lovelace, as the only means in her power to redeem her from misery. And yet I tremble for the life she is to live at London. But to read and write, at the same time, grow troublesome. Shall I call upon you this afternoon? Your's, &c.

LETTER CXCIV.

The same to the same.

January 16, 1749-50.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I saw our equal delight Miss *Muse*, who has not only opened her leaves to a full blow of her rose, but has taken *Boileau* to task for regretting his inclination to the nine ladies, who had so lavishly bestowed their favours on him. Her mama was a witness of the new professions I made of my growing regard for her. I therefore challenge you, before the whole family, to put in your claim to the least smile of her eye, any day or hour you chuse to appoint. I am roused to this defiance by your not having yet performed your promise of the transcript I so long for.

Pray when do you intend to make my patience amends, for being so long without it? After my salutations to the long string

* Vol. III. † Vol. III. ‡ Vol. III.

string of your family, I tie myself of a fast knot to it, as your sincere friend, &c.

LETTER CXCV.

The same to the same.

Sir, Christmas Day, 1750.

Though Death has been cooling his heels at my door these three weeks, I have not had time to see him. The daily conversation of my friends has kept me so agreeably alive, that I have not passed my time better a great while. If you have a mind to be one among us, I will order Death to come another day. To be serious, I long to see you, and hope you will take the first opportunity: and so with as merry a Christmas, as merry a new year, as your heart can hope for, I am, &c.

LETTER CXCVI.

The same to the same.

Sir, May 20, 1753.

My female fry are all on tiptoe for their jaunt to North End, and will not let me rest, till I have settled the day and hour to your mind.

We therefore propose to be with you about twelve at noon, on Sunday the 3d June, if that day will be agreeable to you: unless some notice from you contradicts it, expect us. Pray make our compliments to Miss Byron, whose conversation only can make their entertainment complete. By bringing such a cluck of chickens along with me, you will find no fool like the old one. Your's, &c.

LETTER CXCVII.

The same to the same.

Sir, Nov. 19, 1743.

The devil take the insolent goodness of your imagination! The spirited generosity of Sir Charles to the two Danbys and their sister has put me so out of conceit with my own narrow soul, that I cannot be easy for not having been myself the author of your more than mortal history. By the way, don't I almost talk nonsense? But people in rapture never think that common words can express it. And so let me read on a little.

I could not make an end of this letter without having as *handkerchiefly* a feeling of it as Mr. Sylvester himself had. But don't you think it a bold stroke to give such a limb of the dry law so quick a sense of another's virtue and good nature! But it is your having yourself so much more of it than you want, that makes you willing to part with it, where you are sure it *will be wondered at.*

Thus far I had wrote ten days ago, and not being able to admit any interruption into my reading, whatever might relate to Sir Charles, has prevented me till now from sooner saying a word of your work. Were I to give my opinion at large, it would fill up a larger volume than you would have patience to read; though I should hardly write a line that you would not like. I will not give you a pretence to call me flatterer, by particular praises of *what* I like, nor gratify my own vanity by finding faults, which, perhaps, it may be my fault if I *don't* like.

But let me at least do you this agreeable justice, that let your merit, as an author, be whatever it may, yet since I was born I cannot say, that in all my reading of ancients or moderns, I ever met with such variety of entertainment, so much goodness of heart, and so indefatigable a capacity to give proofs of it! Can any man be a good moral writer that does not take up his pen in the cause of virtue? I had rather have the fame that your amiable zeal for it deserves, than be preferred as a poet to a *Pope*, or his *Homer*.

What a spirited imagination there is in the two keys of Lord and Lady L—! What a sublime simplicity! What an original picture of matrimonial harmony! And yet how pleasantly provoking is that toying temper of her sister! This is quite a new poetical piece that no master-hand has been able to come up to. I will reserve finding fault, till I take a voyage to your end of the town, or till the penny-post walks this way, to put you in mind how much I owe to the volumes you have sent to, your's, &c.

LETTER CXCVIII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

Tunbridge Wells, Aug. 2, 1748.

WHAT say you to me *here*, Miss Highmore?—"Sure, if you go to Tunbridge (says a lady you dearly love, but not better than every one who has the pleasure of knowing her, loves) you will not value travelling a few miles in order to visit us." Tunbridge Wells are about thirty-eight miles distant from London: Hatch (I have enquired) is about forty: and no extraordinary roads. I, a bad traveller, cannot sit a horse—come hither to drink the waters for health-sake—can ill spare the time—propose but *three* weeks—have been here *one*, last Friday—this *my* situation.

The geniuses of Hatch, how different their's! Nothing to do but study their diversion and amusement. Tunbridge, in high season, a place devoted to amusement.—Time entirely at command, though not hanging heavy; impossible indeed it should.—Vehicles, whether four-wheeled or four legged, at will; riding, a choice.—And the worthy Dr. Knatchbull here. What says my fair correspondent?—What her worthy and kind friends to *this?*

Do come and see how your other old lover spins away, hunting after new faces, at fifty-seven. You will see him in his kingdom: and he will read to you a new performance, calculated indeed for the perts of the place: "A Dialogue be-" tween a Father and a Daughter," very sprightly; a little sprinkling of something better in it, but very sparingly sprinkled; as if the author were afraid, that his mind should be thought as antique as his body.—Calculated to reconcile fatherly authority with filial obedience: (so he says.)—But I think, to level the former, and throw down distinction.

He read it to the speaker; who thought it better managed than he expected: but referred him to me upon it; for I was present, and objected to it. I have, according to my usual prolixity, given him half a sheet upon half a page. He wants me to go on with my remarks—has altered two or three passages; but I think not for the better: it is a task, therefore, that I decline. For I am told I should not scribble—have a large correspondence upon my hands. Business, besides, very ill sparing me; and post and coach employed to carry up my directions, and in receiving accounts of management; with about one half of which, only, I can be pleased.

Lord, Lord! Miss Highmore! What figures do Mr. Nash and Mr. Cibber make, hunting after new beauties, and with faces of high importance traversing the walks! God bless you, come and see them!—And if you do, I will shew you a still more grotesque figure than either. A sly sinner, creeping along the very edges of the walks, getting behind benches: one hand in his bosom, the other held up to his chin, as if to keep it in its place: afraid of being seen, as a thief of detection. The people of fashion, if he happen to cross a walk (which he always does with precipitation) *unsmiling* their faces, as if they thought him in their way; and he, as sensible of so being, stealing in and out of the bookseller's shop, as if he had one of their glass-cases under his coat. Come and see this odd figure! You never *will* see him, unless *I* shew him to you: and who knows when an opportunity for that may happen again at Tunbridge?

And here have I turned over.—But how ready are you to catch at a pretence for making your letter short, when you say, that you are afraid that I should design mine for an example in that respect! But how little reason have you to call mine short, when I write more (in quantity) in one line, than you do in three; and more in half a page, than you do in four whole ones. What though my length is my dispraise, I cannot help it: I have no patent for brevity. Nor is it every one, who, like Miss Highmore, can write a great deal in a little compass. Who can paint the dew-dropt meadows, every spire of grass glittering like diamonds of the first water—the obscuring clouds—the sunny glories of the great luminary—the shady lanes, perfumed and enamelled with honey-suckles—the fragrant fields of new-cut hay—the light lasses, and nimble lads, resting on their rakes and forks, lost in wonder and reverence, when they behold the *horse-folks*, as you humbly phrase it! Who can anticipate the yellow harvest, the busy hinds, and the reward of industry!—Who can figure out in still superior lights, the beauties of contemplation which she enjoys in her Clarissa-closet (as she is pleased to call it) with pen, pencil, and books!

books!—The agreeable conversation, at other times, of her enlivening friends; and the charms of dear variety, that soul of female pleasure: and fifty and fifty other no less delightful subjects; and bring them all into the compass of a letter of fifty or sixty short lines!—This is given to Miss Highmore to do; but not to me.

Dr. Knatchbull desires his affectionate compliments to all at Hatch. He gives me his countenance in wishing to see you all here. My respectful ones to Sir Wyndham and Mrs. Knatchbull. Mr. Cibber's duty attends you. And I am, my dear Miss Highmore, your, &c.

P. S. You might have gone on with your subject of happiness; for who is it that tastes it, knows it, and deserves it, if Miss Highmore does not?

LETTER CXCIX.

Miss Highmore to Miss Mulso.

North End, past 11 at Night.

THE place from whence I date this letter will inform you, my dear Hecky, that I am at present happy; for if my good papa, in Lincoln's-inn-fields, had not been well, I should not have been here, but as he is so, and our honoured papa, Richardson, I flatter myself is better, and gives us his company, all his worthy family here, and the amiable Pressy with me, (who, I hope, is fast asleep just now) can I be otherwise than happy? especially as I had the satisfaction of hearing, yesterday, that you were well after a most dismal journey, which filled me with apprehensions on your account, and am sure, that, had you seen the anxious lamentable cares of my papa and his daughter, you would have thought them worthy of a place in the droll catalogue Pressy has indulged me with a sight of.

We have this day had the satisfaction (a satisfaction even you, surrounded as you are by your worthy friends, will almost envy us) of hearing Miss Grandison extricate herself from those difficulties you left her involved in. Oh! my dear, Sir Charles will be all we wish him—I am sure he will—and is destined to shew the world what the purest love should be, when inspired by an object irresistibly amiable, like Miss Biron! I will not though anticipate the pleasure reserved for you, when Harriet shall find her gratitude requited with tenderness and friendship; shall I say love, equal to her own? But such felicity is not yet her portion.

I hope, my dear, you are at present enjoying every pleasure your agreeable situation can afford; sometimes contemplating within the vaulted roofs of awful, venerable cathedrals, and in the Gothic palace relishing the higher sociable delight of conversation suitable to your taste; then varying the scene, by sharing every rural satisfaction the rural entertainments at this season of the year can never fail to give. You will guess, perhaps, by my talking of vaulted roofs and Gothic structures, that I have been favoured with the perusal of your epistle to our dear Mr. R.; he has indeed read to me what he judged proper, and I feel I blush at the recollection of your obliging wish and kind expectation of hearing from your Suky. I assure you she intended much earlier to have gratified herself by addressing you; and her conscience cannot be easy till this reaches you, nor her heart satisfied till you have answered it. But you know the difficulty of secluding one's self from amiable friends we dearly love, and who love us, who intreat the writing hour to be a little while delayed (your cousins do so, I dare say, sometimes). The invitation of Harriet Biron, too strong to be resisted; the modest solicitations of our sweet young sisters to walk, to draw, to prattle with them, almost irresistible also; and then to have it said, this girl is always scribbling, unless, like the fair one so prettily rebuked, she scribbled for the entertainment of all her readers, is such a mortifying thing! Yet thus have I taken myself just now away from my companions, who are working and reading in the room under mine; however, I have the consent of them all to dedicate an hour to their, and my, ever dear Miss Mulso, and I am desired to send their sisterly love and respectful compliments to you; nor can I, in the list of sisters, omit the gentle Miss Chapone, whose worthy mind you have not yet had sufficient opportunity, I believe, of knowing. Her agreeable company has added much to the happiness of your Pressy and of me. Poor Pressy left us yesterday, gallanted by the faithful Edward, and to-morrow she sets out for Epsom, with another young gentle-

man, though all the while, it is well known, her tender heart wanders all over the rambling circuit with her deserving Pyew.

This clock goes wondrous fast! This precious hour how soon expired! And must I already bid adieu to my Miss Hecky; and already assure her, that amongst all her friends, none can esteem and love her with more sincerity than her faithful and affectionate, &c.

LETTER CC.

Miss Highmore to Miss Mulso.

July 13th, 1751.

By this time, my dear Miss Mulso, I doubt not but that your Pressy and you have settled your correspondence, and mutually to the satisfaction of both have excused the little silence of which each accused the other. Our amiable friend, I hope, received pleasure at Epsom, for she stays there as long again as was at first intended; so poor I am deprived of her company at the time I had set my heart upon being very much with her in town and at North End. Indeed, I do not remember to have been in London when so many of my acquaintance deserted me, and have generally at this time of the year been taking some of my country rambles, which I feel as if I wanted now; and often wish my papa and I were wafted together to the side of some clear river, among rows of tall shady trees, and all the pleasing plenteous scene of harvest just within our view; but as that is not at present my fate, I endeavour to content myself with seeing the mower whet his scythe, and mow the grass in the square; walking there, and fancying it a hay-field; and at night can see the radiant moon in as full splendour as you can see her at Peterboro', and, reflected in our canal, think she appears to great advantage. I have not, I confess, such a passion for the intrinsic beauties of the country as I believe you have; yet think it by far more natural, more eligible, and salutary, to pass the summer months there than within the confines of a city; but for my happiness, the company I like, am with, is vastly more essential than the place I am in. I believe my next excursion will be, this week or next, to Blackheath, and after that to Mr. R—'s again, where I am always pleased, where, in reality, I meet with the instructive, though at the same time paternally tender and indulgent, conversation of the generous patron of that happy mansion, as well as the utmost friendship from his excellent lady, and the kindest attention from all my younger amiable companions there.

I should think you did my rude sketch too much honour in preserving and taking it with you, were it not for the respectable persons attempted to be therein represented. Our circle now is incomplete; we all wish for our admired, our dear Miss Hecky, to fill up the vacancy. When, my dear, will you come amongst us? Not till all the verdure has forsaken your P—gh plains? Not till the leaves are all stripped from the trees? till the winter solstice, friendly season, (sociable, and therefore delightful) shall gather together all the straggling set, now called, by different avocations, into various parts of the kingdom.

However, I shall always be contented while I hear you enjoy health and happiness, and that you love and remember your's, &c.

LETTER CCI.

Miss Mulso to Miss Highmore.

Saturday, July 20, 1751.

I am doubly obliged to my dear Miss Highmore for her kind letter, as it was written when she was so happily engaged, that I ought not to have complained had she banished even the remembrance of her Hecky for the time. But what shall I say, when her kindness is before-hand with that of my own Pressy; from whom I have yet not received one line, though I wrote to her a week ago. But these young gentlemen that gallant her about so genteelly have made her forget me; yet, naughty as she is, I cannot but rejoice to hear she is so happy as to be with our agreeable friends, the Duncombes. I fancy she and that other young gentleman you mention, will be exceeding good company to each other.

Don't be angry, my dear, I know you saw me smile at those words in your letter; but, indeed, mine was a smile of pleasure and approbation.

You give me very great pleasure in the account of your own happiness at North End.

End. I cannot envy my friends, but I wish to partake in their delights, which I always do when I hear of them. I am very glad that poor Charlotte has extricated herself from the confusion I left her in. But that brother, my dear, will, I fear, make us despise ourselves and all the world, he is so enormously excellent. I want to hear of his faults, of his weaknesses; for some he must have: and yet is it not owing to something very bad in human nature, that mankind in general are so curious after the spots of a beautiful character, and so desirous of bringing down to their own level a fellow-creature that seems soaring into a higher species. Without doubt this is one of the pitiable littlenesses of our nature; and though I never felt it with regard to a real character, I shall quarrel with my own heart for being inclined, as I fear it is, to this mean jealousy of Sir Charles's superlative merit. Yet I believe it is for Harriet that I am jealous. She was my prime favourite till this man appeared, and I cannot bear to be forced to allow him the preference; I cannot bear that his conscious nobleness should give him rather a compassionating tenderness than an admiration for even the best of our sex. Harriet put this thought into my head, when she said, that notwithstanding his extreme politeness, she almost feared that, in his heart, he looked down on women as on poor, pitiable, weak, creatures. I find I cannot bear that, so it is in vain to try; but if I can but see him thoroughly in love with Harriet, I shall then be convinced that he thinks more highly of her than of himself, and then will my pride be satisfied. I shall long to know the progress of the story, but must wait for that pleasure till I return to be one of our dear papa's happy auditors. I think I am jealous too for my favourite Clarissa; for I verily think this work promises (or threatens, which shall I say?) to excel that. I was angry with Clarissa for eclipsing my Pamela; and I believe I shall now have the same quarrel with her new rival. O! may our dear Mr. Richardson live long to enjoy the fame he acquires; and which, I doubt not, will continue to augment as long as he lives. I rejoice to hear that he is better. I suppose you will make frequent visits at North End, if you do not go further out of town. I think you are not so enthusiastically fond of the country as I am, therefore I will not pity you (as I was going to do) for spending so much of this summer in town. Let me know if you have any excursion in view, for I shall take a delight in following you, in imagination, to your rural retirement, wherever it be; yet is my fancy never so well pleased as when it places me amongst the dear circle at North End, which your pencil so prettily described. You do not know how much pleasure I take in surveying that sketch, nor how often I contemplate every figure in it, and recal the delights of that day.

The clocks here, my dear, go as fast as with you. I have another letter to write, and must stop my pen, which runs on apace without being tired. Yet not till I have indulged it and my heart too in the pleasure of assuring my dear Miss Highmore, that I am her very affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, July 15, 1753.

My dear Miss Highmore was very good to write so soon after her arrival at Weston House: and had I not been obliged to pass two days at Enfield, which set me behind-hand with all my business, she should have had her kind expectations answered before the last week had elapsed.

But why filled my amiable girl, the first side of her sheet, with so melancholy an account of her depression of spirits, on leaving a father, so well beloved by every body, to go to a delightful spot, and to a lady of whom she is so fond, and who was always so fond of her?

"I hope the vain girl (say you) has not "represented herself of too much conse-"quence." You have not, my dear. Do we not all know, that you are of the utmost to that indulgent parent: and of very high to all who have the pleasure of your acquaintance? But looks it not, as if one of the frankest-hearted girls in Britain took a little hardly some of my past truly paternal freedoms, when she adds, — "If she has, I am sure Mr. Richardson will "cure her of that mistake." Well, but, my dear Highmore, this shall not hinder me from telling you of your faults, if any appear to me; and I hope you will deal as freely

with me—I have multitudes—I wish I were but half as good as I think you.

Your papa writes so well, and is so fond of writing to his beloved daughter, that I will leave it to him to tell you, how happy he thinks himself in knowing you to be so; and that you are right in supposing "that his benevolent heart expands "with delight, at the account he receives "of your health and felicity." When therefore you can turn the bright side of things outward, as you do; your mental Æsculapius, as you do a certain man the honour to call him, tells you, that you have prudence and reflection enough to be your own physician; and, that had not your spirits been weakened by indisposition, and a train of disagreeable perplexities, that have affected one of the evenest tempers in woman, you would not have had reason to paint your sensibilities in such dark colours, on your leaving, for such agreeable friends, even a father, whose paternal goodness you have from infancy so largely experienced.

How sweetly, as you describe, do you pass your time! I rejoice with all my heart in Mrs. God—ll's happiness. One of the greatest pleasures, that a beneficent mind can know, is to have it in her power to lay an obligation on a worthy, on a grateful, mind.

"A strong taste for literature; a mind "well stocked and improved by the pro-"ductions of authors, ancient and mo-"dern; an amiable disposition; good "sense." Where could your fair friend have made a better choice? Where else, so good a one, in such an age as this, of foplings and *petit maitres?* I wonder not that such a young gentleman "be-"haves so properly, as you say, to his "lady; and that your esteem for him "rises every day, more and more, as "you are a witness of that his proper and "affectionate behaviour to her." I had both reverence and love for her excellent mother; methinks I could wish her to be permitted to look down from her heaven, to see how happy that beloved daughter is, for whose happiness she was so anxious. God continue it to them both—and them to each other, as an example of that conjugal piety, which is so very rare in the present age, among people of condition!

"What a strange character does that "of Cicero always appear to you?" It is a strange one; yet he was a glorious crea-ture. Great geniuses, we are told, have not small faults. You have made such proper observations on this great man's failings, that it is needless to add to them. And charmingly do you say, "that the "truly noble and exemplary character, "is that which is uniformly good, great, "and wise, in every trial."

What a wretched creature, is the man of title, you mention? But I have not so much pity for the lady as you have. She knew whom she married, and, I doubt not, proposed to herself at first, counterbalances which would content her, and this is evident to me, by the way in which she lives. What signifies to her the low company "he keeps," so as he confines himself "to an obscure corner of his own "magnificent house with them;" and leaves her (in the character of "an ami-"able woman," and in every one's eye, the more amiable for her misfortunes) "to "receive in the rest, and nobler parts "of the house, the visits of every cre-"ditable family around her?"—So long as she finds herself "honoured and be-"loved by her visitors; and has the cre-"dit, as well as the power, of having "ornamented the noble house she reigns "in, with absolute sovereignty, accord-"ing to her own directions?"—So long as she has "an equipage and retinue of her "own, every prospect art or nature can "afford to please surrounding her stately "habitation!" With all these advantages, and such a lord, ask you, can she be tolerably happy? Yes, Madam, exquisitely so, as a managing woman, and as one who knew (as I hinted) beforehand, the wretched creature she chose to marry. And, indeed, you answer your own question:—"She appears so, say you "(well, she may!) and having been long "accustomed to the present method (an "enviable one it may be called! for must "not the man be a loathsome creature?) "may really be (the deuce is in her, if "she be not!) as tranquil and cheerful, "as her easy and polite deportment seems "to denote."

This advantage she moreover reaps from the low and servile company he keeps, that through them she can manage her lord as she pleases: since they and he are her's in absolute property. Come, come, Madam, let us shew our pity in the right place. The tranquil lady deserves it not—she is a managing woman, as I said: all women love power: she has t

in its perfection. She has perhaps shewn it, eccentrically, in more instances than one; and every body knows, that Lady O—— can be Lord, as well as Lady O——, whenever she pleases—and fit she should, when the poor creature her lord so behaves as to be the jest as well as companion of his own menials.

Next Thursday, my good-naturedly perverse wife thinks of going to North End!!! O Miss Highmore! women ought to be controuled, if they are like my wife—in pity to themselves, they ought. For when left to their own will, how do they choose! how are they puzzled!

Mrs. G—— has done me favour in her remembrance of me. My best respects attend her, and, if acceptable, her's. I am involved in sentimentizing: — very hard, among so many charming girls, that I could not get myself excused from this task. No helps from any of you. Go, naughty, idle chits—to pretend to approve what I am about, as if it would be promotive of the public good; and yet, when I hoped a finger from every one of you, to find no aid—not so much as extracts from a work ready written to your hands! yet call me papa, boast of filial regards, and so forth: yet, dotard as I am, I cannot forbear priding myself in my girls—and on every occasion, styling myself, as now to you, your, &c.

LETTER CCIII.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, Jan. 31, 1754.

I AM, when I recollect some of the free things I have formerly written to my dear Miss Highmore, extremely angry with myself. I believe I loved to blame rather than commend, some years ago. Fie upon me, for my ill-nature, if so—and vainly too—setting up for a Mentor, when I was but a Momus. But do I grow better-natured, and see clearer, as I grow older? I congratulate myself upon that, if I do. What admirable observations you make on the consequence it is of for young persons to be thrown early into good and improving company! I had a good mind to transcribe every word you wrote on this subject, and to beg of you to let it pass for my own. What a poor creature was I at your age! And you were always so good—were you not?

But, though I love you for your charity, when you infer from premises very laudable, that we should make great allowances in errors, not grossly immoral, for those who have not had the benefit of being accustomed in their youth to good and improving company, I cannot allow of the abatement you mention to be made, of the merit of those who have had better opportunities, and improved by them. I will not, my dear Miss Highmore, allow of your level; in order to bring down to a state of nature, those who owe their merit to actions that are the consequences of habitual virtue. Let us judge of merit and demerit, as they appear to us, from whatever source they spring; and not, my dear child, think it assurance to condemn the contemptible. We shall then encourage merit (too apt to be despised by such, in order to bring it down to their own level) and, through shame, have a chance to amend the faulty, and make them strive to be measured by the standard of the others. It is not to be imagined what it is in the power of women to do in this particular; especially of those who are amiable in person, and have a reputation for good sense. Often have I seen a coxcomb, who set out with all the confidence of a laughing Sir Hargrave, shrink into himself, merely at the reproving eye, and restrained smile, of a young lady of judgment; and particularly, if she has had the address to turn round on the spot and distinguish, by her smiling familiarity, another man in company with whom she had reason to be better pleased.

No vain woman can be more fond of admiration, than men of this cast: let them be conscious of a judiciously given disappointment, and no men are such nothings. The sensible woman, who laughs with the creature she should laugh at, debases herself; puts herself on a level with him. But this is the judgment, to avoid superciliousness, and being really prudish (no matter for the aspersion) in the correction she looks; for a look will give it. I am speaking of a sensible woman, you know!—such women, scores of which, I was going to say, I have the happiness to know.

"The admonitions of parents can never "have the effect on young minds, that

"the examples of persons near their own "age will produce; and reasons why it "must be so are obvious and natural "enough." Never, Miss H——! where the parents are companionable to their children; and can allow for the foibles of youth—such as your's, suppose! Where the children are reasonable, and have no points in view, which they are ashamed to own!—What! never, Miss H——? And are there no such cases? Cannot there be such open-hearted, frank girls as Harriet, where there is a Mrs. Harley or Mrs. Selby? — Unhappy that there are not more such indulgent parents, and such undisguisedly-minded children! How obvious soever the reason for what you say is, there cannot be a more dangerous doctrine propagated among young people, than that which springs from an allowance of this nature. And I have therefore taken notice in print, that young people, in certain cases, should never be determined by the advice of young people; and the less by that of those who are in the same circumstances with themselves. It is not, I have said, what you would do, Polly, Sukey, &c. were you in my case; but what ought to be done. I know that your observation is rather owing to facts than justice. But we will not, if you please, too readily give up justice to facts, lest we should make custom a law; where it would be of general use to applaud the exception, and to endeavour to weaken the force of the faulty rule.

Give me leave to say, that I intended more by setting in strong lights the frankness of Harriet's character, in one of the most delicate circumstances of female life, than what, at first sight, may be thought of, on a cursory reading. What do you think I have had the confidence to answer to the pressing instances of two persons, for whom I have great honour, that I would begin a new piece! that I would think of doing so, when I had reason to believe, that the many delicate situations that this last piece, as well as Clarissa, abounded with, were generally understood and attended to! What a duce! must a man be always writing?

Fie upon me, for taking the first sheet of paper that came to hand: I am come to the end of it already; and how much unsaid!—I have no room to add more, than that I am, your, &c.

LETTER CCIV.

Mr. Richardson to Miss Highmore.

London, Sept. 19, 1757.

I WRITE, my dear Miss Highmore, in gratitude, in fear, in love, in hope, in pain. In gratitude for your favour to me of Sept. 6th, and to thank good Mrs. God—ll, through your hands, for her kind remembrance of me.

In fear, of hurting your good papa, who grudges me the favour of so kindly-long a letter from you (the thanks I got for communicating it to him) by doing offence to your eyes:—but a little bit of jealousy in his fear, for all that, lest any should, by accident, receive from you a letter one line longer, than any one of those you wrote to himself. What will he do, if you should take heart at last, and marry, and your husband be sometimes distant from you!

In love, because I cannot help it, if I would; and take delight in the account you give of that health, and serenity of mind, which I pray may ever attend you.

In pain, because I cannot pour out my heart as glibly as usual, or rather as formerly, to my beloved friends, when I paid my duty to them on paper, by reason of paralytic and failing fingers, when that heart is as sincerely theirs as ever.

In hope (I had like to have forgot that, having so little left for myself) that you and all you love, if that be possible, continue always as happy, with some necessary variations, however, to keep the pool of life from stagnating, as you describe yourself to be at the penning of the letter before me.

Hush! hush! hush! dear Mr. Highmore! No such thing, as the above particularization, being an infallible sign of a long answer. I will be brief in the rest, for your sake; and also for my own; though once I loved to prattle to this dear girl.

I am delighted with your account of your studies, your pursuits, your diversions, and with those of the more athletic of your own sex with you, mentioned by you with so much advantage to them all.

"Your well-furnished library," amusement equally entertaining and instructive!

"Henry and Francis;" of all books of the kind! — That it has been read by Mrs.

Mrs. D—— is recommendation with numbers! Mrs. Montague, Lady Bradshaigh, Miss Highmore. Well, I'll take it up again, and try to like it better than I did, when I dipped into it last. No one has a higher opinion of these names, and of Mrs. D——'s judgment, than I.

"My opinion of Mr. Gray's Odes?" You know I admire the author. I have heard that you and Mr. G—— have both studied them together, and have found out all their beauties. I have no doubt but they are numberless—but indeed have not had head clear enough to read them more than once, as yet. But from you, I expect the result of Mr. G——'s studies, and discoveries on the subject, as also your marginal notes; which will not, I hope, be too severe, &c.—Why that caution to me, my Miss Highmore? I am glad I did not say all I said to Lady B—— about Henry and Francis.

"And then comes the kindly felicitat-"ing subject;" to which I directed Patty to answer.—She did, I hope.

And there, Mr. Highmore, is an end, I hope, of your tender solicitude for the eyes of our dear girl, on my account, for the present!

Excuse bad writing, interlining, &c.—"Was it not always bad?" Yes! but never so bad as now. Repeated respects to Mrs. God—il. I am, &c.

LETTER CCV.

Mr. Spence to Mr. Richardson.

ALLEGORY OF ART AND NATURE.

Stratton-street, January 21, 1748.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE read over your contents, and return them to you, with many thanks. Even the reading of them (which contents, I think, never did before) gave me, several times, those fine emotions which you know I am so fond of;

Those feelings of the soul!—that charming pair,
That swells and agitates the heaving breast,
And bursts in tears of pleasure at the eye.

I have a moral feeling for you, of another sort; on seeing how much you suffer from the contrariety of advices that have been given you. Such a multitude of opinions can only serve to confuse your own judgment, which I verily believe would direct you better, without any help, than with so much.

I wish you would take up a resolution (which perhaps may be new to you) of neither trusting others, nor distrusting yourself, too much. If you bundle up the opinions of bad judges in your head, they will only be so much lumber in your way; and even the opinions of good judges, in general, when they come to decide about particulars in your Clarissa, are much to be suspected.

Have they sufficiently considered your design and manner of writing in that piece? Do they know the connections and dependencies of one part upon another? Are they acquainted with your various ends in writing it; your unravellings of the story; and your winding up of the whole? Without these lights, a very good judge may give a very wrong opinion about the parts that compose it. Another defect in those that are called the best judges is, that they generally go by rules of art; whereas your's is absolutely a work of nature. One might, for instance, as well judge of the beauties of a prospect by the rules of architecture, as of your Clarissa by the laws of novels and romances.

A piece quite of a new kind must have new rules, if any; but the best of all is, following nature and common sense.

Nature, I think, you have followed more variously, and at the same time more closely, than any one I know. For Heaven's sake, let not those sworn enemies of all good works (the critics) destroy the beauties you have created. If you indulge them all in their wicked will, they will cut every tree in your garden into a bird or a beast.

What I have just said will hold stronger against lopping. You love the Scriptures. There, you know, a good man is said to be like a tree by the rivers of water. You are, as yet, flourishing in all your verdure; for God's sake don't let them make a pollard of you! Upon reading the contents of the whole, I am more and more convinced that much ought not to be parted with. Pruning is always proper. If you see a dead branch, or a straggling bough, that offends your eye, cut it away; but do not labour to find out faults where they do not meet you.

For fear I should fall into too grave and critical a way myself, if you please, I'll tell you a story. I wish it was shorter;

but you will be so good as to take it as you find it.—But, hold! shall I call it a dream or a story? A dream, you know, may be as long as one pleases, and so I'll e'en call it a dream!

As we had a tolerable afternoon yesterday, I went, as usual, into the Park; and, after a turn or two in the Mall, stept to the pretty coffee-house at the end of it, just without Buckingham-gate. I had the second part of your Clarissa in my pocket, and was so eager to go on with the story, that I could not help pursuing it even in the coffee-room. I seated myself there by the fire, and after reading about ten leaves, my eyes (which are still very bad with my cold) would not suffer me to go any farther. I laid my book down upon the table, and in a few minutes sunk insensibly into a gentle slumber, to the hum of three or four critics, who were gravely debating over their coffee, on the other side of the room.

Our thoughts in sleep are often only a continuation of the dreams we have while we are awake. At least, it was so with me now; for I was no sooner asleep, than I found myself again walking by the side of the Mall, with several of the same persons in it that I had left there so lately. But there was one lady, whom I had never seen there, I think, before, and who soon engaged all my attention. She was tall; of an easy air, and noble deportment; with a face more charming than one of Guido's angels. There was grace in all her locks and motions; her dress was rather negligent than set; she had very little head-dress, and her hair fell in easy ringlets down to her shoulders; her bosom was shaded with lawn, but not imprisoned in stays, as one could discern through her long robe of white satin, which was collected there, though it flowed all loose, and at its full liberty, behind her. As I and several others were admiring her (for no man could look steadily on her without admiring her) a little, pert, busy woman, with much of the air of a French milliner, came tripping to her, and cried (half out of breath) "O! Ma'am, I'm "most extremely glad of having the plea- "sure of meeting your la'ship here! but, "for God's sake, who dressed you to-day? "Never did Heaven give so many beau- "ties to any one person to be so hideously "neglected as your la'ship's are. Those "beautiful auburn ringlets to be suffered "to run to all that wildness! why, they "wander at least three fingers-breadth "lower than they ought to do! Then those "wide unmanaged sleeves! and that in- "tolerable length of your robe, that "hides the prettiest feet in the universe! "That length of robe is what I can't nor "won't bear with!" As every thing she said was accompanied with much action, these last words were followed by a very violent one; for just as she had finished them, she applied a pair of scissars (which she had till then concealed) to the robe, which had so much offended her, and running them along with the greatest impetuosity, in a moment as it were, divided all the lower half of it from the upper. A gentleman, who stood just by me, and had observed the whole affair with a particular attention, seemed more than ordinarily moved at it. "What! (says he) shall it "be allowed to so mean a creature to in- "sult so noble an one, thus in the sight "of day, and in my sight, who am so well "acquainted with the dignity of the one, "and the vileness of the other?" "Do "you know them? (said I.) For Heaven's "sake! who are they?" "These are "not real ladies (replied he) but allego- "rical ones." "Allegorical ladies (cried "I) I am extremely glad of it; for I "don't know that I ever saw an allegori- "cal lady before, in my life; but, pray, "what are their names?" "That fine "lady (says he) with so free and graceful "an air, is NATURE; and that little "busy French milliner, who has cut off "the most flowing part of her robe (per- "haps only to make pincushions and "patchwork of it at home) is ART. Now "you know who they are, you will, I "doubt not, be the more ready to join "me to catch that wretch, and conduct "the noble sufferer out of this crowd. "Let us fly, then! (cried he, taking me "by the hand) let us fly!—" And at that instant I started out of my sleep, awakened by a sudden quarrel that had arisen between the critics in the coffee-room. It seems they had taken up your book, which I had dropped heedlessly on the table. Three of them maintained, with great clamour, that it ought to be reduced to half its bulk; that a story ought to be short and quick, and the events crowding in upon one another; that a giant-novel was a monster in nature; and several other things that put me in mind of the restraining character of the milliner in my dream. I could not

not help smiling a little to myself. I put your book into my pocket, which they had flung down again upon the table, in the impetuosity of their arguments; and left them to debate over a point, which they seemed very little to understand.

I am now safe again in my room, where I should be glad to see you on Saturday, if it suits your convenience. I will have a vegetable dinner that day, of which you may take a part or not, as you please. If it should be inconvenient to you to stay, it may, however, be of service to me; for, with such temperate diet, I shall be the less subject, perhaps, to these hurrying dreams. I am, in the mean time, very sincerely and affectionately,

Your's, &c.

LETTER CCVI.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Sept. 27, 1754.

I THANK you, dear Sir, for your tender concern, good wishes, and hearty prayer for my worthy friend Mr. Tickell. I have the satisfaction to assure you, his late disorder has not so greatly impaired his strength, nor sunk his spirits, to that miserably low state, which his over anxious mother's fear, made her apprehend. God be praised, she is comforted, by a hopeful appearance of her beloved son's perfect recovery. He is pretty well in health, at present, thank God.

I protest I am at a loss, how to answer some parts of your last obliging favour. Give me leave to say, you have more good-nature, humility, and patience, than any other man upon earth, or you certainly are the greatest hypocrite under the sun. If I could suspect Mr. Richardson's veracity, I should look upon your submission to my inferior judgment as a polite piece of complaisance. I begin to fear, you think me too peremptory, and self-sufficient; if so, you resolve perhaps, to acquiesce, rather than contend, with a positive woman. You are extremely indulgent, and I ought to thank you, for every favourable allowance you afford me, who have not any of that delightful, spirited wit, and charming vein of humour, which plead excuse for not quite right things in Lady B——.

Mrs. Belfour has given you a right notion of this mad-cap, and I could tales unfold; but—I never could manage her; nor will I have any more boxing-bouts with Madam ——. If our favourite charming Harriet, cannot make this sprightly lady blush a little, at her unreasonable aversion; or, at least, silence her exclamation against old maids, I pronounce her incurable.

The worthy maiden you mention, is an honourable woman. I really believe, I was fond of this good-natured aunt Catherine, before I could speak. Lady B—— is as well acquainted with her real worth; but I will not tell all I know, because you are sufficiently informed already. I most sincerely love this ungovernable Lady B——; we always were affectionate sisters, although her over-hasty disposition, did not altogether please my graver turn. She has been blest with constant good health, and, thank God, she still enjoys that great blessing. I ever was, and am, less happy in this respect; and yet this lady B——, with her high health, and a continual flow of fine spirits, never was active in using necessary exercise: that neglect is attended with a consequence which gives me concern; because it renders her incapable of using that exercise, which I think needful for preserving health. I cannot help pitying a human creature, loaded with fat; it ever was my endeavour to guard against that heavy condition; and I am very thankful, that I can reap benefit and pleasure from my nimble feet, and a trotting horse.

After much ado about nothing, let me assure you, Sir, I have more than the shadow of an inclination to oblige you. I willingly comply with your request. Pray, dear Sir, call not the fragment, you desire to peruse, the amended History of Clarissa. I have only attempted to alter particular parts abruptly. It is, in short, a medley. I told you I had weakly endeavoured to imitate. No matter what I intended by some foolish things, thrown amongst the heap—if you can read it, you shall.

After scribbling this long epistle, I have not fully, I think, answered your last letter. Here is enough, however, to try your patience; allow me, at present, to subscribe myself, your obliged, &c.

LETTER

LETTER CCVII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

October 10, 1754.

ALLOW me to congratulate your Ladyship on Mr. Tickell's amendment, and the prospect of his perfect recovery. I join with you, Madam, to bless God for it.

Lady Bradshaigh acquaints me, that she, as well as your Ladyship, meets with persons who quarrel with Sir Charles Grandison. They are welcome. A good character is a gauntlet thrown out. As some apprehend it reflects upon themselves, they perhaps think they have a right to be affronted. The character of a mere mortal cannot, ought not, to be quite perfect. It is sufficient, if its errors be not premeditated, wilful, and unrepented of: and I shall rejoice if there be numbers of those, who find fault with the more perfect characters in the piece, because of their errors, and who would be themselves above being guilty of the like in the same situation. Many things are thrown out in the several characters, on purpose to provoke friendly debate; and perhaps as trials of the reader's judgment, manners, taste, and capacity. I have often sat by in company, and been silently pleased with the opportunity given me, by different arguers, of looking into the hearts of some of them, through windows that at other times have been close shut up. This is an advantage that will always be given by familiar writing, and by characters drawn from common life. A living author, who succeeds tolerably, will have more enemies than a dead one. A time will come, and perhaps it is not far off, when the writer of certain moral pieces will meet with better quarter from his very censurers. His obscurity—a man in business pretending to draw characters for warning to one set of people; for instruction to another: Presumptuous!—But enough of this subject. I ought to be and am abundantly satisfied with the kind reception given to what I have obtruded upon the world, in a new light, and in the approbation of many truly pious and good.

Your Ladyship is at a loss, you say, to answer some parts of my last letter. You are pleased to magnify my patience and humility: For what?—For having a great opinion of your judgment, and for inviting your correction. "Either "(you say) I have more good-nature than "any man on earth, or am certainly the "greatest hypocrite under the sun." From the knowledge I hope I have of my own heart, with that whole heart I disclaim hypocrisy, the lowest of all vices, ingratitude excepted. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; and can it require any great degree of patience to hear characters blamed that were not intended to be perfect? What battles have your beloved sister and I fought! She has reason to blame me for my rusticity rather than for my yielding.

Your Ladyship could tales unfold. I hope Lady B—— will *not* be quiet, that you may be provoked to unfold them. I am particularly glad, that your Ladyship has not the dislike to a certain class of females whom that lady is so fond of satirizing. O! how have I used her on this occasion! She can hardly forbear: but just touches them now, and away. I think I have made her half afraid. But this Miss Do—Let us join forces, Madam, against this Miss Do. There is not a better lady on earth than your sister, when Miss Do is out of the way. Strange! that so excellent a lady as Lady B—— (your Ladyship's sister) should be so misled by such a flirt as Miss Do.—Yet, not so very strange neither: for I know not how it is, but I myself, though I could sometimes beat Miss Do, see something to be pleased with in that lively girl. Favour me, dear Madam, with the history of this young lady, and her airs, that I may either like her more or less. I am sure she must have some good qualities, or she could never have had such an interest in the heart of a sister of Lady Echlin.

O that I could have the honour to see you two dear sisters under my happy roof! Lady B—— gives me hope, that she will be in London this winter. Then would your Ladyship and I, if there were occasion, join; but there would be no occasion. She would be all goodness. Miss Do would not be with her. She never once, in the visits she honoured me with, when last in town, brought that girl with her. She only is her companion in her closet or dressing-room; and now-and-then writes a paragraph for her there. And my lady is, in her absence,

so mild, so meek.—Bless us, Madam, you cannot think how mild! how meek! — And I am so aukward, for not seeing any thing reproveable in her, yet remembering many flightinesses in her writing, that I know not how to behave myself to her.

A thousand thanks to your Ladyship for your kind compliance with my request, to be entrusted with your papers on the History of Clarissa. When? By what way will they come? I was in hopes that the permission, and notice of the transmission, would have been given in the same letter. They shall be very safe when they arrive, and attend your Ladyship's commands in the return.

I have written to Mr. Skelton. Let me intreat your acceptance of his Discourses from me. Your Ladyship would greatly oblige me, if you could inform me of any thing I or mine could do here, to give you pleasure. I am, &c.

LETTER CCVIII.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, July 31, 1757.

I KNOW you are inclined to judge favourably, and naturally disposed to pity the afflicted: I therefore doubt not your making a reasonable allowance, nor your having tender compassion for me, when I assure you my long silence hath been occasioned by a woeful misfortune, which sorely afflicts my heart. I cannot describe what my anxious mind suffered between slender hope and tormenting fear, before a melancholy event made me a sorrowful widow. Indeed, Sir, I have lost a tender husband; a very worthy valuable man. No wonder I am bitterly afflicted for such a lamentable loss: but I endeavour to moderate my grief, by considering it is my duty to submit patiently to the will of God. Almighty Wisdom, seeing what was best, and good for us, has punished me deservedly; and under this trial let me be thankful that I have not the least doubt of my dear husband being happily released from a miserable state of health. A blessed change it was for him, who endured a long and painful illness, with exemplary patience and resignation; contented to live or die, as it pleased God Almighty. No mortal ever quitted this life with more apparent tranquillity. The last sad scene, so distressing to me, was not unhappy to him, I am sure: and that is my consolation. Excuse me, dear Sir, troubling you with my groans. I shall add a few lines more concerning my present condition; for I cannot help telling you, my dear departed friend hath testified his respect and dependance on a faithful wife, by appointing me sole executrix: and I am also guardian to his only nephew, who inherits his good uncle's estate and title. I am as anxious for this young man's welfare, as if he were my own child: and his uncle and I have been parents to him from the hour he was born. This boy's father died several months before the child came into the world; and his mournful mother, overwhelmed with grief, expired immediately after the birth of her son. An infant, thus deprived of both father and mother, is a most pitiable case: but he has not been an unhappy orphan; and I heartily wish my great loss may not prove a greater misfortune to him. At his early time of life, in such circumstances, and in such a libertine age, a boy under seventeen is in a dangerous situation. God give him grace to make a right use of an uncommon good understanding. He is a fine hopeful youth at present; has had a private education, not to his disadvantage in any respect; and I hope to see him a sober and serious student at Oxford, please God we live. Some people would be apt to think me impertinent, and perhaps would say—What is all this to me?—but Mr. Richardson, I know, is not such a man.

I have seen Mr. Sheridan here lately; he appeared to be in pretty good spirits; but I think he cannot be tolerably happy, unless he quits the slavish management, which does not better either his health or fortune. The little wonder was quite a new scene to him; he admires the romantic situation greatly: but, alas! it does not afford me pleasure as usual; Villarusa is not what it was: all appears dull and gloomy, in my tearful eye, though I do labour to recover my spirits.

I shall rejoice to hear you enjoy such a state of health, as is sincerely wished and prayed for by, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCIX.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

August 12, 1757.

MOST heartily do I condole with your Ladyship on your very great loss; and should have presumed to do it before, had I not been myself so ill in the nervous way, that for some time I was unable to write; and had I not at other times considered that any thing I could offer by way of consolation for so heavy a deprivation, to so good a Christian, and so pious a heart, would be needless; and that time, the pacifier of *every woe*, could only, by God's grace, alleviate *your's*. Nor did I doubt, that your good sister, and your favoured bishop, would be ready to pour the balm of Christian comfort into the wounds of your mind.

I congratulate you, Madam, on the resignation and pious departure of the gentleman you so tenderly loved. What pleasure must this give, on reflection, to such a mind as your's! How much ought this reflection to alleviate the pangs that will accompany it on the loss you have so recently sustained!

Your Villarusa will be again your Villarusa to you: but time must have first mellowed your affliction. A journey to England will perhaps be of use to you: to Oxford, so much in the way of your new duty; to Lancashire, receiving from, and giving comfort to, beloved relations there; to London, perhaps in company of those dear relations, and to a beloved daughter and her young family, and other friends. [May I have the honour to be one in the list?] Then, after all these duties paid, and inclinations gratified, will your Villarusa appear to you with new charms; nor will a tender sigh and silent tear to the memory of the dear departed, in that little wonder, diminish, but rather exalt, the joys of your meditation.

God Almighty sanctify to your Ladyship your present affliction, is a prayer put up by all mine, as well as by,

Madam, your, &c.

LETTER CCX.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Rock Hermitage, Nov. 10, 1757.

Dear Sir,

ACCEPT my grateful thanks for your last obliging favour. "Time (as "you observe) is the pacifier of every "woe," with God's assistance; and "time may mellow my affliction." But very sure I am, deep wounding grief is incurable on this side the grave. "Vil-"larusa will again be Villarusa to me," you say. No, Sir! that is impossible! This house, these admired improvements, this country, never more can be agreeable to me. If God Almighty permits me to see my native country it is probable I shall not return again to Ireland. And yet I am so attached to my hermitage, I feel unwilling to quit that bewitching little cell. When my sorrowful days came, the little wonder was, and is, a wonderful recreation to me; and thankful I am, that this innocent, retired amusement, serves to unbend my mind. I wish Mr. Richardson could see me in that romantic situation, seated on the mid-rock, the briny flood flowing within a few yards of my feet. Don't be alarmed, good Sir, you may venture to sit by me; it is not Shakespeare's dangerous mid-rock.

I am glad you call my freedom kind; but cannot allow that it is in the least condescending to acquaint Mr. Richardson with my affairs: nor should he, who so justly merits esteem, doubt his "be-"ing one" in the short "list" of my most valuable friends; one on whom I could rely, and repose a fearless confidence. Although we are not personally acquainted, surely there is friendship subsisting between us; and if I do ever reach Old England, I trust my honoured friend "may live to see the day."

I hope my young man will not disappoint my expectation of his settling at the university; but I dare not be oversure of any thing in this uncertain world.

I must tell you, Sir, our good bishop gives me hopes of seeing him in Great Britain; and I hope you may see that agreeable day. This excellent prelate has been particularly kind to his unseen admirer, under affliction. Not been sparing "to pour the balm of Christian "comfort;"

" comfort;" nothing is wanting but a wished-for visit from Patmos. But why should I expect such a compliment. His Lordship, in every letter to me, mentions Mr. Richardson with great regard. I told him you had been so much indisposed in the nervous way, that for some time you were not able to write. He answered " not able to write! alas! that " great genius! then I must not trouble " the good man with a temptation to " write to me."

I beg my respects to Mrs. Richardson, and to your daughters, with grateful thanks to you and them, for that kind concern, and pious remembrance, which will always be duly acknowledged by, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCXI.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Echlin.

Dec. 3, 1757.

You charm me, Madam, with your description of your rock hermitage. What a sweet retirement must it be, as you have improved it! " The little won- " der, you tell me, in your more thought- " ful hours, was, and still is, a wonder- " ful recreation to you; and that you " are thankful (I am sure you are for " every relief) that this innocent, retired " amusement serves to unbend your mind." And does your Ladyship wish that I " could see you in that romantic situa- " tion, seated on the mid-rock, the briny " flood flowing within a few yards of " your feet? Don't be alarmed, Sir, " (add you most condescendingly) you " may venture to sit by me—it is not " Shakespeare's dangerous mid-rock."

What would I give for a sketch of this sweet hermitage, and of the wonders round it, and in prospect from it? With what delight should I place it near the picture of the house at Haigh, which I was allowed upon my own terms (as this must be) to take a copy of; your beloved sister's and Sir Roger's figures in it, meditating the beauties of the situation! May I not hope, dear Madam, to be so indulged? Is there not in your knowledge some young artist, that on my account could be so employed? Let me have in constant view, the sweet, the " bewitching little cell which so attaches " to it, the heart of good Lady Echlin, " which she feels so unwilling to quit; " which is, in her deeper meditation, a " wonderful recreation to her, and serves " to unbend her mind, and in which she " condescends to wish I could see her."

Your Ladyship bids me hope for the pleasure of seeing you in England; I should have the more joy on such a wished-for occasion, as I think the change of scene must be of consolation and diversion to you; and as you must give and receive so much delight to and from such near and dear relations, as you have here; and the rather as you are of opinion that Villarusa, consolatory as it is at times to you, can never be all that it once was to you.

If the land and sea views I am a petitioner for, with your sweet hermitage, cannot be conveniently granted, a sketch in Indian-ink or black lead on vellum, would delight me, hanging before me in view of your dear sister and Sir Roger's Haigh. Still, my dear Lady, either way, on my own terms.

God bless your young gentleman, your ward! may he answer all your pious cares and wishes! Your, &c.

LETTER CCXII.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

Jan. 5, 1758.

Be it known to you, dear Sir, I long since intended to send you a sketch of my humble cell, which you are pleased to wish for, and desire to have, upon your own terms; pray, dear Sir, don't name that word again; if you mention any thing like it, you quite spoil the compliment. I have a young artist, a fair lady. She was drawing with her Indian-ink, prettily employed in that romantic situation; but, alas! unhappy days came—you know how it has been with me, and I will not again trouble you with my groans, if I can help it.

" What would you give for a sketch " of that hermitage, &c." Why you have given all I could wish: you have honoured my favourite by your most pleasing request; and its picture you shall have, please God we live. But this piece of plain nature, is by no means fit to be placed near that palatum mansion house, Haigh. I wish I may see it fixed in your pleasant, rural retreat. Indeed, Sir, I

do

do hope to place it with my own hands, at Parson's Green—if I live to reach the south of England, I trust we shall meet.

I received a letter from Patmos this week; our right reverend friend is in good health, thank God, and talks of his intended trip to Great Britain. If there is such another divine under the sun, what would I give, to have him my young gentleman's preceptor, at Oxford. I am anxious about this material point; a discreet, good clergyman I want for that purpose; would much rather choose a real good Christian, than what the world calls a clever learned man. I have applied to the good Bishop of Oxford, for his advice and assistance on the important occasion. My friend Ashurst consulted his Lordship, and I depend greatly upon his recommendation. He is my second best bishop in the world—no modern, card-playing prelate.

"It would do you good, to be employed in any way that would do me "service, or give me pleasure." I gratefully thank you, dear Sir. If you are not the man justly entitled "to the sacred name of friend," I know not who can deserve it; and if I should not highly value such uncommon friendship, most unworthy must I be of Mr. Richardson's friendly regard.

Your mourning wax and paper, alarmed me. Rejoiced I am, all is well at home. Many happy years may you and your family enjoy together, sincerely prays your less happy much obliged, &c.

LETTER CCXIII.

Lady Echlin to Mr. Richardson.

December 10, 1759.

Good Mr. Richardson, it is not in my power to say how highly I esteem and value your cordial friendship, nor enough to admire your good and generous heart. Your unseen friend would ill deserve such an invitation, attended with all imaginable kindness, could she allow that so bountiful a scheme for her accommodation "is only a mere offer of "friendly civility." Dear Sir, I think it affectionately kind and obliging; "and "think you," Sir, I can imagine "privacy or retirement would be broken in "upon?" No, surely; in Mr. Richardson's house, who could have any such apprehension? "A family without secrets; lovers of privacy," and not frequent visitors; such always find comfort at a home agreeable to themselves, and render it so to others of the same rational turn and taste. Don't talk of a genteel neighbourhood to Dame Echlin; she has nothing to say to such fine people, for you are to know, and I hope you will see, that she is not at all genteel, in the fashionable sense of that expression.

Please God we live, I trust we shall meet at Parson's Green: to pay my respects to you, good Sir, and your agreeable family, is my sole inducement, and will afford me sufficient pleasure, without additional company. It is very ungenteel not to be always young, but it is past noon with me, and too late in the evening to be much gratified with novelty. You are pleased to call your Villa a little place; but I am sure it is a palace compared to the small habitation Lady Echlin makes her real home at present. I only desire to live quiet in this pleasure-mad world.

Lady B— informed you, I suppose, that I tarried several weeks at Haigh. Thankful I am for the satisfaction of seeing my two sisters and many valuable friends in good health. It was a pleasing surprise to meet my friend Greene at my first arrival in Lancashire, and we spent several days together at Haigh. In Lady B—'s dressing-room, I was introduced to Mr. Richardson in effigy; and I rejoiced to see that agreeable portrait, which has such a pleasant countenance; it looks pleased with notice from a friendly eye, and seems to return a sensible obliging smile. I am assured the resemblance is so strong I could not mistake the original in "the Mall," or the "Bird-"cage Walk."

Lady B— gave me a particular account of that most humane and pious act of charity—the Magdalen-house; and truly glad I am, that so religious an asylum is provided for the most miserable creatures upon earth. I thank you, good Sir, for presenting me with two volumes on this subject. Cases so shockingly unhappy are pitiable, and none are more worthy of compassion than real penitent sinners. Your preface is a most excellent fine discourse; one need not be a conjurer to discover the writer. Who but the author of Clarissa could so sensibly affect and touch a reader with the penitent's

penitent's lamentable story, and with a benevolent Grandison spirit, help forward a charitable work, to succour and promote the future welfare of so many wretched and forlorn? And it is to be hoped a bountiful subscription will be continually supporting this laudable institution.

With repeated thanks for all your favours, I subscribe with pleasure, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCXIV.

The Rev. Mr. Hildesley to Mr. Richardson.

Bishop's Court, Isle of Mann, August 26, 1760.

Worthy Sir,

THE revival of a correspondence, so long dormant, may possibly require some apology, or at least some reason, for it.

The seeing two such respectable names as Dr. Young's and Mr. S. Richardson's, among the subscribers to Dr. Doddridge's *Family Expositor*, inclines me to hope that work commands some share of your approbation and esteem: and from the motive of that persuasion, I am induced to request a piece of friendly trouble from you, viz. of procuring for me a set of the new edition of it from Mr. Rivington. It is designed for a present to an old friend and acquaintance of mine (whose welfare and happiness I have much at heart) the worthy and amiable Lady Lambard, of the vine at Sevenoaks, in Kent. Order them, if it may be, without the pictures, which, in my poor opinion, are a very needless ornament to a work of that sort.

The same insuperable curiosity that sent my pen and person to Salisbury Court, prompted me also to seek the acquaintance of that singularly happy instructor, whose pious labours I have long reverenced and admired. I had the agreeable favour of receiving two or three letters from him, and was within a few hours of a personal interview with him, by his own appointment, in London, the last time, I believe, he was there. Bating some gentle hints at forms and orders, and some few points wherein he differs from the established church of England, which his education (though greatly guarded and softened by his charitable spirit) naturally produced from him, I cannot help thinking and saying I never had a more agreeable correspondent.

The six volumes of the Family Expositor, above referred to, contain as much matter of real edification, as any performance of the kind I have ever met with. And I should be very glad (if not too troublesome to you to use your pen) of receiving the pleasure of your opinion, and of what you have heard your excellent friend of Welwyn say of it. I dare venture to hope (though perhaps he will not allow him (Doddridge) the title of an original) that both the Doctor and you will concur with me in pronouncing him a most affectionately pious, and truly Christian writer.

I know not whether the distance of my present exotic situation, added to that of the date of my last letter to you, may be looked upon as a bar to my title (if I ever had any) and to my request, to be retained in, or restored to, the roll, of those you call your friends: but if you will, by any hand whatever, be pleased to certify me of your health, and of your accepting and excusing the freedom I have here taken, it will be a particular satisfaction to him, who here subscribes, with great truth, dear and worthy Sir, your's, &c.

LETTER CCXV.

Mr. Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Hildesley.

Sept. 10, 1760.

My good Lord,

I RECEIVED, with great pleasure, your favour of the 26th of last month, which your Lordship kindly calls the revival of a correspondence, and with the greater for that very reason; for no one more sincerely respects your Lordship than myself.

I cannot say that I have read the Expositor. I have been exceedingly ill in what I may call the paralytic way, so that I have been obliged to lay aside the pen, and to lessen such of my attentions in the reading way, as did not immediately relate to my business and family affairs; and had not given directions to the proprietors of the work, to put me down as

as a subscriber to it. It was a spontaneous act of their own: and so (for aught I know) it is with regard to our Welsyn friend; for though I know that Dr. Young greatly respected Dr. Doddridge, for some of his former writings, I never heard him mention this. But your high opinion of it, will not suffer me, for my part, to be long without it.

Allow me, my Lord, to say, there is one paragraph in your favour before me, that gave me much pain at first reading. It is that which begins "I know not "whether the distance be a bar to my "title, if I ever had any! [what an if!] "and to my request." My dear good Lord, permit me, with the highest respect, to rejoice in your condescension in allowing me to rank your Lordship in the roll of my most revered and estimable friends: a liberty I shall be proud of taking to the last hour of my life.

I am entirely of opinion with you, my Lord, in relation to pictures in books written on divine subjects. Those in Milton, for example, in which the angels are represented cloathed, the man and woman quite naked, are equally absurd and indecent. I am, my Lord, with the greatest and most respectful esteem,

Your, &c.

LETTER CCXVI.

The Rev. Mr. Hildesley to Mr. Richardson.

Isle of Mann, Nov. 11, 1760.

It was a singular pleasure to me, to see the worthy Mr. Richardson's hand to paper, though I fear, somewhat troublesome to him to afford it me. It would have been equally obliging, good Sir, if you had wrote by an amanuensis, could you but have submitted to that mortification.

The compliment you are pleased to make me, of procuring Doddridge's last work for yourself, on account of my opinion of it, I hope will be amply repaid by the pleasure and emolument you will receive from the perusal of it: and that some of the attention you still bestow on your family affairs, you will not think foreign to them, to be employed in the Family Expositor; the blessed effects of which, I trust, will remain, when we and our families shall be no more—with respect to all earthly cares.

I am sorry to hear the account you give of Dr. Young's impending misfortune,* whereby the public, as well as himself, are likely to be such great sufferers. You do me the honour to join me with yourself in calling him our friend. It is an honour I should be very proud of sufficient title to. The friendship of so valuable a person, in every respect, I was ever, indeed, ambitious to obtain and cultivate whilst he was my neighbour for upwards of twenty years; and for that end, have often intruded upon him, as I did on another certain genius; and in which borrowed credit of knowing and endeavouring to be known to worthy and ingenious persons, I cannot say but I have sometimes happily succeeded. The impertinence of my frequent visits to him (for, impertinent must that liberty be deemed, which in so many years failed to receive the encouragement of ever seeing him once at my house, beyond the threshold of my door) however, was amply rewarded; fora-much as, I can truly say, he never received me but with agreeable, open complacency; and I never left him but with profitable pleasure and improvement. He was, one or other, the most modest, the most patient of contradiction, and the most informing and entertaining, of any man (at least of any man who had so just pretensions to pertinacity and reserve) I ever conversed with. This, Sir, I do not tell you, to certify you of the Doctor's character, who are much better acquainted with it, from your own knowledge of him; but to appeal to you, from the justice I do him, with respect to mine. I hope to hear a better account of him, as to the malady, he is apprehensive of; for he is a man, I think, of singular importance to the Christian world. I pray Heaven may think so too.

With my thanks for your last favour, and my sincere prayers for your health and prosperity, I remain, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

P. S. Pray, who is this Yorick? (a prebendary of York, I know he is). But what say you to his compositions, that have of late commanded so much of the attention and admiration of the wits of

* Loss of sight.

the

the present age. I am told, they have the countenance and recommendation of some ingenious Dutchess: Is this true or not? I doubt, as you are an author yourself, possessed of the veneration and applause of the public, your modesty will not incline you to oblige me with your real sentiments, at least not with the whole of them. The best apology for this freedom is the title you allow me to your friendship.

As I am an exile, you will readily imagine, how acceptable is every line I receive from my native country; and proportionably more so, when dated from Salisbury Court.

Alas! his late Majesty of Great Britain suddenly snatch'd away: but yet we may say—full of years and full of glory!

LETTER CCXVII.

Mr. Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Hildesley.

London, Sept. 24, 1761.

ENCOURAGED by one letter, written by me with tolerable steadiness, my only amanuensis, my daughter Patty, not being well, shame and duty oblige me to try what I can do myself to so respectable a friend—so your Lordship allows me to call you.

I have the great pleasure of congratulating you, on Dr. Young's good state of health, and on his abated apprehensions of the calamity he dreaded; as well as on a promotion that does equal honour to his acceptance, and to the conferrer's, the royal conferrer's choice and nomination; and still the more in his own opinion, as he is the immediate successor and heir of one of the best divines, and soundest Christians, and usefullest genius, that ever graced a court, or a nation, I may say—Dr. Stephen Hales, clerk of the closet to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales; and upon the recommendation of his Majesty himself, as a noble peer assured me yesterday. This, I know, is a circumstance that your Lordship will hear with pleasure.

Who is this Yorick? you are pleased to ask me. You cannot, I imagine, have looked into his books: execrable I cannot but call them; for I am told that the third and fourth volumes are worse, if possible, than the two first; which, only, I have had the patience to run through. One extenuating circumstance attends his works, that they are too gross to be inflaming.

My daughter shall transcribe for me the sentiments of a young lady, as written to another lady, her friend in the country, on the publication of the two first volumes only.

"Happy are you in your retirement, "where you read what books you choose, "either for instruction or entertain- "ment; but in this foolish town, we are "obliged to read every foolish book that "fashion renders prevalent in conversa- "tion; and I am horribly out of hu- "mour with the present taste, which "makes people ashamed to own they "have not read, what if fashion did not "authorise, they would with more rea- "son blush to say they had read! Per- "haps some polite person from London, "may have forced this piece into your "hands, but give it not a place in your "library; let not Tristram Shandy be "ranked among the well chosen authors "there. It is, indeed, a little book, "and little is its merits, though great has "been the writer's reward! Unaccoun- "table wildness; whimsical digressions; "comical incoherencies; uncommon in- "decencies; all with an air of novelty, "has catched the reader's attention, and "applause has flown from one to an- "other, till it is almost singular to dis- "approve: even the bishops admire and "recompense his wit, though his own "character as a clergyman seems much "impeached by printing such gross and "vulgar tales, as no decent mind can "endure without extreme disgust! Yet "I will do him justice; and, if forced "by friends, or led by curiosity, you "have read, and laughed, and almost "cried at Tristram, I will agree with you "that there is subject for mirth, and "some affecting strokes: Yorick, Uncle "Toby, and Trim, are admirably cha- "racterised, and very interesting, and "an excellent sermon of a peculiar kind, "on conscience, is introduced; and I "most admire the author for his judg- "ment in seeing the town's folly in the "extravagant praises and favours heaped "on him; for he says, he passed unno- "ticed by the world till he put on a fool's "coat, and since that every body ad- "mires him!

"But mark my prophecy, that by another season, this performance will be "as much decryed, as it is now extolled; for it has not intrinsic merit sufficient to prevent its sinking, "when no longer upheld by the short-lived breath of fashion: and yet another prophecy I utter, that this ridiculous compound will be the cause of "many more productions, witless and "humourless, perhaps, but indecent and "absurd; till the town will be punished "for undue encouragement, by being poisoned with disgustful nonsense."

I have not been able of a long time to write so much and so steadily. I begin to be sensible of failure in my fingers; but in my heart shall be ever,

Your lordship's, &c.

LETTER CCXVIII.

The Rev. Mr. Hildesley to Mr. Richardson.

Bishop's Court, April 1, 1761.

Dear Sir,

Your paragraph relating to Dr. Young, confirming what I saw in the newspapers, did, as you rightly judged, give me much pleasure; not so much or altogether on his account, as of the family he is likely to prove a blessing to, by supplying the great loss her Royal Highness and her offspring have suffered in the death of her late pious and worthy curator, in her domestic spiritual concerns. My long acquaintance and correspondence with the late Dr. Hales, has afforded me, not only great pleasure and emolument, with regard to myself, but likewise occasion to know, what a benefit he was to the Christian and philosophical world in general; and to such as enjoyed his more immediate personal instructions in particular. And I have no doubt, by what his modesty has allowed him, in point of friendship, to impart, to whom next, under God, the excellent qualities of a great personage, whom the nation hath entertained the most favourable conceptions of, are to be attributed. I wrote to the good man, the 15th of October last, and, notwithstanding the usually uncertain passage of letters to and from hence, through the various hands they are committed to, by sea and land, I received an answer from him of two folio pages, close wrote, dated the 25th of the same month; at the conclusion of which, after his customary manner of supplicating heaven in my behalf; he says, "This "is a long letter for one in his 84th "year."

Your happening to mention this great and good friend of mine, has led me to express thus much of my feeling sense of the loss I have in him personally, besides what I share in common with the public, and which, I conceive, you readily indulge me in. As my father had the honour of dispensing the first rudiments of his education, the Doctor thought proper to transfer some part of that regard, he had for his tutor, to the less worthy son: and which I have enjoyed without interruption for near forty years--even nearly within a few weeks of his death. If I am not so happy in the like intimacy with his no less excellent successor, at Leicester House, I most sincerely rejoice in, and partake of, the satisfaction, all (and they are very many) who are not strangers to his admirably adapted talents for the interesting and important province he is appointed to: interesting, I mean, to the Royal family, and in them to the public national welfare; and in that light, I am persuaded, Dr. Young will shine most gloriously! You will do me a favour, when opportunity offers, if you will be pleased to tell him, that a quondam neighbour of his, in Hertfordshire, desires his acceptance of hearty congratulations, on the occasion he is going to have put into his hands, of being, next under God, what I know he delights to be, the happy instrument of much good, and of being more and more the promoter of that religion, he has long been an ornament to.

Your strictures, good Sir, upon the indelicately witty Yorick, from that little I accidentally read of shameless Shandy (for that little was enough to forbid me to read more) I believe to be very just. (As to the ladies, they may be allowed to understand no harm in what they read: but our sex, I doubt, have no pretensions to such a plea of inconception.)

That corrupt nature should be pleased with what ministers plentifully to the foul imagination of the polluted heart, is not strange; but, that spiritual men, and ecclesiastical dignitaries should countenance and encourage such a production, is hardly capable of any sort of defence. However,

I hear

I hear from several, and those very good hands, that now the laugh is pretty well subsided, many begin to be heartily ashamed at that which had raised it.

Whenever it suits you *aut per se aut per alteram*; to hear from you, will much oblige yours, &c.

LETTER CCXIX.

The Rev. Mr. Loftus to Mr. Richardson.

Dublin, Nov. 12, 1756.

Dear Sir,

IT is long since my real esteem for you has given me a right to make use of that affectionate expression, and since you have encouraged me in it, I shall constantly make use of it.

Till you had sent them to me, I did not see your reasons for concluding Sir Charles Grandison's story in the way you have done; but, since I have considered them, I am entirely satisfied.

It is the business of all your friends to dissuade you from any close application to your studies. Some time ago I was much pleased with a paper of Fielding's, wherein he represented the different effects which the labour of the hands and the head had upon the constitution. By the former there was constantly procured a good appetite, refreshing sleep, health, strength, and high spirits; but by the latter, every one of those effects were almost always reversed; and this I had the mortification myself of experiencing some time afterwards. I had closely confined myself to writing for more than half a year, and the consequence was, that my nights were sleepless, my appetite gone, my head become giddy, and I was hardly able to walk; and, from being one of the most cheerful men in the world, I was sunk into such an extreme dejection, that I could find no pleasure in any thing, nor think that any could be found in them. But from this wretched condition I was soon rouzed, by remounting my long neglected horses, and riding abroad for two or three hours every fair day; for, by this means, I was in a month or two restored to my former health, and taught this piece of wisdom into the bargain, never to apply myself again to study with such an intense application as long as I shall live. I wish that my most esteemed friend may see in this both the cause of his weak nerves, and the proper method to obtain a remedy for them.

I am really astonished at the account you give of the manner of your writing. There is in your persons a difference and peculiarity of character so preserved through the whole of their actions, that I could never imagine but that this proceeded from a long and careful revisal of your work. But I am to inform you from hence, that it is, in all probability, a vain attempt for you to think of doing any thing with yourself by force; you must always follow the natural bent of your inclinations, and you will be sure always to shine in whatsoever you shall write in this manner. I was struck with your Pamela when it first came out; and, if I be not much mistaken, it contains in it a beautiful simplicity which I never knew excelled, except in the Bible.

As I know that you are conversant with learned men, I should be glad to hear what their opinion is of Mr. John Hutchinson's works. I have a mind to read them; but as this will require a very deep knowledge of the Hebrew to do it to any purpose, I would willingly know the character that they bear in the learned world before I undertake such a tedious and difficult work. I am, dear Sir, with the greatest truth, your, &c.

LETTER CCXX.

Mr. Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Loftus.

Rev. and dear Sir, Dec. 13, 1756.

I AM greatly favoured by the re-consideration you have given to the winding up of the History of Sir Charles Grandison. It would have been easier for me, while I was in possession (as I may say) of the characters, to have proceeded with them, to the amount of another volume, than to have entered upon a new subject, as many of my friends wished me to do. But I have written a vast quantity; and, being tired myself, I thought that was a fair warning to me not to incur the mortification of tiring my readers. Then, to own the truth, I was extremely chagrined at the unprovoked treatment I met with in Dublin. And Faulkner, in whom I confided, still more than the rest (with whom, abandoning me, he spontaneously joined himself) afflicted me. But it is over, unless I were to resume the pen,

of which fault they have contributed to cure me: should I, however, can you find me a plan?

I congratulate you, Sir, that you left off your intense studies while your health was recoverable. I was not so prudent: and years have confirmed my maladies, and made them habitual to me; if I may so express myself.

You, Sir, had recourse to your horses; a happy expedient! I never could ride.

Have you never any calls to London, dear Sir? I should be very happy in an opportunity to return you personally my acknowledgments for your favours to me, and to cultivate more and more the friendship for me so happily begun, with a gentleman of so much worth and honour.

I have enquired of two learned gentlemen, their opinion of the works of Mr. John Hutchinson; men of piety and extensive knowledge and charity, yet who know not each other. They both agree in discountenancing that gentleman's *whimsies* (one of them called them) and those of his followers: men, generally (they say) incapable (but by propagating novelties) of making any figure in the literary world. The Hebrew (they both say) is one of the poorest of all languages, and has not words to enable an adept in it, with clearness and precision, to express his ideas, insomuch that one word may be interpreted into several meanings. Hence it is that the Hutchinsonians give themselves a latitude of explaining, very absurdly sometimes, the words of the Hebrew scriptures; and pretend to derive from the Pentateuch, and even the Book of Genesis, all and every science which has been the effect of late discoveries. All those parts of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, that they approve of, are, it seems, to be found there; and for those that are not, they decry him. In short, they generally scoff at that great philosopher, and torture the Hebrew words and syllables into a justification of their own absurd notions. They are (one of the gentlemen says) treated by all sound scholars, and men of learning in the universities (with the learned of both of which he has an extensive correspondence) as visionaries, or little better; as dogmatists, conceited and vain: yet he doubts not but there are well-meaning men among them; many weak ones he is sure there are. I am, Sir, with repeated acknowledgments, your, &c.

LETTER CCXXI.

The Rev. Mr. Loftus to Mr. Richardson.

Dublin, May 31, 1757.

Dear Sir,

WHETHER we shall judge with Swift, that a fine genius is the natural cause or the effect of a tender constitution; or, with Fielding, say, that the labour of the brain is necessarily productive of this malady, so it is that I cannot recollect one person who has been eminent for wit, that has not laboured under a sickly habit of body. I am sorry, indeed, that my worthy friend feels so much of this evil; but it is the condition of this life to have all advantages blended with disadvantages also, and he therefore who is so highly exalted in the one case, cannot expect to be entirely exempted in the other.

I think I will communicate to you some reflections which I lately had in my brother's wood. Whilst he was detained in the house with business, I was enjoying a sweet evening in that solitary delightful retirement. Besides the concert of the little birds, I had the thrush, the blackbird, the wood-quest, all singing about me; and that in such numbers, and with such a loud exultation of joy, as struck me with amazement at the Great Creator's bounty to those little creatures. For what must that goodness of his be, which, by all kinds of blessings which their nature was capable of receiving, had poured out such a profusion of happiness upon them?—upon them, who, whilst they rejoiced in the favour, were yet insensible of the hand from whence it came!

But how was it then that I had met with such a shocking scene of distress in my way hither? My brother's whole yard was filled with a crowd of miserable people waiting for his charity, whom the hardness of the late and present season, epidemic disorders, and a variety of other calamitous accidents, had visibly reduced to such a degree of wretchedness, that the most hardened of hearts must have been melted by such a dismal spectacle! Was not man, out of comparison, the more noble creature? Was he not, too, the only one that was sensible of the Author of his being? And had he not, then, an unquestionable right to a better provision, and a greater share of happiness, than these little

little animals could have any claim to? How was it then, that there should be such a profusion of God's blessings bestowed upon the one, of misery upon the other; and this, not only at the present, but in all other times: man being, undoubtedly, the most miserable creature in this world? Revelation only could solve all these difficulties:—man was fallen; man must die; and man must live for ever. Want, labour, sorrow, sickness, was in this view necessary and fit for him in this world, his state of trial; and exemption from all misery, and everlasting life, and a fullness of never-ending bliss, were the proper, and only proper, portion of the next.

I know not how this may seem to others; but, at the time, it struck me with a most full and pleasing conviction of these great truths of Christianity, and I am still of the same opinion.

Believe me to be, with the greatest truth, dear Sir, your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXII.

The same to the same.

Dublin, Feb. 10, 1758.

Dear Sir,

I AM much concerned to find by your last kind letter to me, that your state of health is still so bad:—we are beginning to grow very healthy here, after a very sickly winter.

There is no person whose judgment is more to be relied upon in literary matters, and therefore you may easily imagine how agreeable it was to me to have your approbation of my thoughts in my pamphlet.

For many years past there has been a spirit of irreligion growing upon some of our people, and a manifest carelessness about it in all; from which even our clergy are not entirely exempted; and from hence have our papists had such an advantage against us; whose industry was equal to our neglect, that the protestant religion was rather declining every day, than gaining new strength, till the charter schools came in to our aid. And this I had such a sensible experience of in my own parish, where I found some families had been perverted, and to my extreme mortification, the greater part irretrievably so, that the sense of those things brought that little book which my wife has sent you, and which I so rejoice in, since it has gained your approbation.

Our mother country has often treated us very ill, and always to her own detriment. It is owing to a step of this kind, that France is now her rival in the woollen trade; and I am much afraid that it has been owing to a most faulty neglect in ourselves, that we have, by near one half, so many papists among us at present. The common people of this country are naturally strong bodied and bold, like their neighbours of England; but from a worse diet and lodging are better able to bear the fatigues of a military life, to which, from a greater love of idleness and pleasure, they are much more generally addicted; and could our government by any means gain upon their affections to make them like our service, and be faithful to it, they would never be at a loss for recruits, which now frequently happens both in the fleet and army.

Although I have still some hopes for us, as to public affairs, yet I have my terrors about them also. The late expedition to France, and our behaviour in North America, shews such a bad spirit in our commanders of every kind, that I cannot help dreading the consequence of a war which must be waged under the conduct of such men, however superior our natural strength may be to that of the enemy. But I will say no more upon this most disagreeable subject.

Believe me to be, with the greatest truth, &c.

LETTER CCXXIII.

Mr. Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Loftus.

May 25, 1758.

MY reverend and ever obliging friend, Mr. Loftus, may be sure, that had I not been in a poor way as to health and spirits, I should not have left unacknowledged, for so long a space, his favour of February last.

I greatly deplore the spirit of irreligion that has so visibly gone out, and has spread itself through these protestant kingdoms; and still more the carelessness of professors, from whose laudable and true christian zeal, and a blessing upon it, a cure only is to be expected. What advantages must the activity of our ever-watch-

ful enemies reap from this united depravation! What must become of the flock, surrounded by wolves, whose shepherds keep no guard! But while the Roman catholic subjects of other protestant powers, are true and faithful, and mostly so from nationality, if I may so express myself, is there an unhappy necessity for us to weaken our natural strength so much as to consider all of that faith as enemies to our civil establishment: in a word, as *Jacobites?* Cannot we, in pursuance of the wise and moderate and christian measures laid down in your patriotic treatise, make such a brave and sturdy people, if not immediately protestants, patriots; and active in behalf of those who pay them, and give them protection in their civil concerns?

O that the mother country were wise, and would give way to an enlarged spirit! How just is your remark, that our enemies of France owe to the narrowness of heart of former English ministers, the success of that formidable rivalry, with which they insult us!

Is there not a prospect that in the approaching session of your parliament, something of so salutary a nature will be attempted? Far be from my heart the shadow of an invidious reflection! But let me ask, would the King of Prussia, were he the sovereign of such a populous, such a hardy and brave, people as the Irish, submit to such old customs, and prejudices, as make the majority of them useless to themselves and him? Why is it necessary in Ireland, any more than in Prussian Silesia, a conquered province, that a Roman catholic must be looked upon as an enemy to the government that protects him? I too well know from history what may be said. But what an additional strength would unanimity bestow upon both islands, could both sides meet in love and trust? What wisdom in the measure of sending to America battalions of brave and hardy Highlanders!

We know the advantage despotism has in great reformations (where the prince deserves to be called a sovereign) over a limited authority: but despotism must rest somewhere, even in republics; and cannot the three estates, co-operating, do every thing necessary for the welfare of the whole people? Wants there more in such a measure as that we have before us, than christian principles, christian moderation (which every side profess) and love of country, to actuate every heart, and unite every hand, in the common defence? But how much better has my dear Mr. Loftus touched upon this subject!

However, our prospects seem, God be praised, to be amended; yet, have I my anxieties too, with you, about our public affairs—One signal defeat, which God forbid!

May 24, 1758. Just received your favour of the 16th. How very kind! "About three months since," say you. True, indeed, and were not my apology above, too just, I would now most ingenuously take shame to myself.

You rejoice me, Sir, in the hopes you give, that our worthy Mr. Skelton is likely to find his account, in his deserved ease and quiet, from a late event. Poor Dr. Clayton! inimical man! Persecutor to his power! But he is gone! I will say no more of him.

My best respects to your good lady; and to our worthy friend, Mr. Skelton.

I am, with true affection, your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXIV.

Rev. Mr. Skelton to Mr. Richardson.

My dear friend, Pedego, May 10, 1751.

I WILL no more keep silence for tenpence, if I have any thing worth a farthing to say; and I hope a few words in Mr. Millar's letter, on which I intend to touch, at the end of this, will furnish me with matter for an useful correspondence.

I cannot expresss to you the concern I feel for the dear little girl, whom I protest I love with an affection very near that of a parent. But what hath a mind so extremely delicate to do in so rugged a world? Or why should she be long banished among minds like ours from the society of angels, the only beings that are made like herself? I could wish it would please God to prolong her life, that she might exemplify to the world, all those amiable gifts and graces that we see budding in her only, and can find no where else, but in books of imagination. If God pleases to exalt her to the perfection and happiness of superior beings, do not, my dear friend, grieve or repine at his goodwill to her. Even natural affection often makes us too bold in our wishes

wishes. As to a wish that this most admirable creature should live, I question whether it is not a wish incompatible with the very nature of things, it seeming impossible that such sensibility should be found in a body less tender and delicate.

It is with inconceivable delight I find in Mr. Millar's letter, that you are labouring on your *good man*. Go on, my dear friend, and friend to mankind. May God give you strength and spirits to finish what you have begun. Take a few friendly hints from one whose very soul loves you, and gasps for this new help to a better life than he hath yet been able to exhibit to the eyes of his master.

As to yourself, take time now and then to breathe and recruit your spirits, as well as to review and correct the produce of the last week or month.

As to your *good man*, I need not bid you christen him; but I would willingly see him as good a Christian, as a fine gentleman can be. I don't mean that the two characters are in the least inconsistent, for I am sure the latter is impossible without the former; but I mean that he should appear on all occasions to act, and suffer, upon Christian principles; that he should fast and pray, but not fast every day, nor pray every hour. The devotional part of Pamela's character was a little too much charged, that of Clarissa somewhat too little, till towards her death. I wish to see the present warm in that respect, but duly tempered; that he may be rather a Christian hero than a saint.

Let him suffer according to the prediction of Plato, and the description of Seneca, in Lactantius, and that greatly, both in respect to the severity of the suffering, and the manner of bearing it. Your good man will be out of nature, if he is not persecuted: nay, he will be no very good man, if the world do not give him this testimony.

Take your characters and incidents from real life, rather than from books, that your work may be new, and not the copy of a copy. Be free with the good or bad now on the stage, but under feigned names and disguises, that the world may feel as it reads.

Above all, consider the bulk of your readers, how grossly attached they are to facts, and adventures, and be sure to enliven the performance with plenty of subordinate events, all conspiring, and leading to the grand event or catastrophe. The main stem of your story may now and then branch into episodes; but take care that every twig grow as naturally out of the tree, and bear as much fruit, as in Clarissa.

I hope you intend to give us a bad woman, expensive, imperious, lewd, and at last a drammer. This is a fruitful and a necessary subject, which will strike, and entertain to a miracle. You are so safe already with the sex, that nothing you can say of a bad woman will hinder your being a favourite, especially if now and then, when your she-devil is most a devil, you take occasion to remark how unlike she is to the most beautiful, or modest, or gentle, or polite, part of the creation.

I am far from thinking you will take this freedom of mine ill; yet considering how great a master I am writing to, my affection, which dictates this, can hardly excuse itself to my prudence.

My most affectionate respects to good Mrs. Richardson, and to my young friends, particularly to my dear little Nancy.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXV.

Mr. Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Skelton.

London, Feb 19, 1752.

WILL my dear and reverend friend forgive the long silence of one who loves him, as well as if he wrote to him every post? But if he does, I can hardly forgive myself. The latter end of last November, the 20th instant, I think, is the date of your last.—Fie upon me!—And yet between business, writing, and indisposition, I have something to say for myself to myself, though nothing to you, but of my shame.

My poor girl remains much as she was by my last. She desires her most thankful compliments to you for your ever paternal kindness to her, in your affectionate remembrances and prayers for her. I thank you, my dear friend, for your agreeable warmth in relation to the bad woman to be ingrafted in my story. You say, "You could help me on this "subject greatly, and that you have a "dozen female devils to paint from, whom "you would force to sit for me, in all the "horrors of infernal features; who, if "rightly taken off, would preach up vir-

" tue to the fair sex, beyond my Pamela's, " Clarissa's, &c."

I demand your assistance, my dear Mr. Skelton: assemble your dozen devils, and take them off for me; and if I can ingraft them in my story, down they go. And pray favour me speedily, though I have been so remiss.

I wish I could have consulted you, my dear friend, in my new work.

I rejoice with you on Mr. Thomson's happy situation and prospects.

Is there no call, no business, no inducement, that could bring you and him once more among us?

But tell me, are you comfortable in your situation? Have you been able to transform any of your brutes into men and women? Have you any conversable people among you?

Your happiness, my good Sir, will add to that of your, &c.

LETTER CCXXVI.

Dr. Johnson to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir, March 9, 1750-1.

THOUGH Clarissa wants no help from external splendour, I was glad to see her improved in her appearance, but more glad to find that she was now got above all fears of prolixity, and confident enough of success to supply whatever had been hitherto suppressed. I never indeed found a hint of any such defalcation, but I regretted it; for though the story is long, every letter is short.

I wish you would add an *index rerum*, that when the reader recollects any incident, he may easily find it, which at present he cannot do, unless he knows in which volume it is told; for Clarissa is not a performance to be read with eagerness, and laid aside for ever; but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious; and therefore I beg that this edition, by which I suppose posterity is to abide, may want nothing that can facilitate its use.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXVII.

The same to the same.

September 26, 1753.

Dear Sir,

I RETURN you my sincerest thanks for the volumes of your new work *; but it is a kind of tyrannical kindness to give only so much at a time, as makes more longed for: but that will probably be thought, even of the whole, when you have given it.

I have no objection but to the preface, in which you first mention the letters as fallen by some chance into your hands, and afterwards mention your health as such, that you almost despaired of going through your plan. If you were to require my opinion which part should be changed, I should be inclined to the suppression of that part which seems to disclaim the competition. What is modesty, if it deserts from truth? Of what use is the disguise, by which nothing is concealed?

You must forgive this; because it is meant well.

I thank you once more, dear Sir, for your books; but cannot I prevail this time for an index? such I wished, and shall wish, to Clarissa. Suppose that in one volume an accurate index was made to the three works;—but while I am writing an objection arises—such an index to the three would look like the preclusion of a fourth, to which I will never contribute; for if I cannot benefit mankind, I hope never to injure them.

I am, Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

Dear Sir,

YOU ask, "How can I find time for "so much reading," &c. Those who are not obliged to attend to any particular business, have nothing to do but to look for time, and they are sure to find it. But there are those who sit with their eyes shut, and let it pass unobserved, through wilfulness or negligence. No wonder, such do not find time.

* Sir Charles Grandison.

O, you--you—you worse than ill-natured! How could you rip up the old story of traversing the Park? How could you delight to tear the tender skin off an old wound that never will be quite healed? I was hurt more than you could be. My pain was in the mind, your's only bodily. Did not you forgive me? However, (behold the wax I am made of!) the latter end of this paragraph melts and disarm my intended anger: for the present only; for I shall find farther matter for quarrel, I foresee.

The first time my friend saw your picture, he asked, "What honest face have "you got there?" And, without staying for an answer, "Do you know, I durst "trust that man with my life, without "farther knowledge of him." I answered, I do know you might do so with safety. And I put you down for a judge of physiognomy.

As I sit at my writing-desk, I cannot look up without viewing your picture; and I had some hopes the looking upon it, as I writ, might a little have restrained, or at least kept me within bounds. I have tried the experiment, when I have been upon the edge of a ranting humour, and heard myself whisper, "What! with that smiling face?"—and found I was encouraged, rather than restrained: so gave you a familiar nod, and ranted on, as I do now, without fear or wit.

I only meant to joke a little upon Dr. Young; not to be severe. If it has that appearance, pray let him not have it; for, he might think me very impertinent. He pretends to be serious upon this.

Dec. 27.—I have, since I wrote to you last, stumbled into Dr. Middleton on the *Miraculous Powers:* and, in truth, I do not like him. Perhaps I do not understand him. But to me he appears a caviller at immaterial points. And I doubt he may do more harm by the controversy he has occasioned, than he can do good by endeavouring to prove many pretended miracles, to be either fabulous or the effects of priestcraft. But, seriously, I must own he has lessened these antients greatly in my opinion; for, what can be said in favour of their countenancing so many impositions, as it plainly appears they did? It is but making a poor compliment to Christianity, to say it wanted such gross abuses, to strengthen and propagate it. And though, to the rational and well-judging, it shines the clearer, for having struggled through, and shaken off these clogs of absurdities; yet its appearing in its native excellence is not owing to those through whose hands it was transmitted to us.

You see, Sir, I write upon every subject to you, without considering whether proper or not: but I know, if I am wrong, you will inform me.

Dec. 28.—I should be greatly delighted to see the correspondence between you and the young lady you mention. Some time or other, I hope to be favoured with it.

I own I do not approve of great learning in women. I believe it rarely turns out to their advantage. No farther would I have them to advance, than to what would enable them to write and converse with ease and propriety, and make themselves useful in every stage of life. I hate to hear Latin out of a woman's mouth. There is something in it, to me, masculine. I could fancy such an one weary of the petticoat, and talking over a bottle. You say "the men "are hastening apace into dictionary "learning." The less occasion still for the ladies to proceed in their's. I should be ashamed of having more learning than my husband. And could we, do you think, help shewing a little contempt, finding ourselves superior in what the husband ought to excel in? Very few women have strength of brain equal to such a trial; and as few men would forego their lordly prerogative, and submit to a woman of better understanding, either natural or acquired. A very uncomfortable life do I see between an ignorant husband and a learned wife. Not that I would have it thought unnecessary for a woman to read, to spell, or speak English; which has been pretty much the case, hitherto. I often wonder we can converse at all; much more, that we can write to be understood. Thanks to nature for what we have! We have, there, an advantage over your sex. You are in the right to keep us in ignorance. You dare not let us try what we could do. In that, you shew your judgment; which I acknowledge to be much stronger than our's, by nature; and that is all you have to boast of, and a little courage, which is oftener shewn upon a principle of false honour, than from an innate, true bravery.

My employments and amusements at this time of the year are so much the same round, though not disagreeable to me, that they are scarce worth committing to paper, except as you desire it. I rise about seven, sometimes sooner; after my private duties I read or write till nine, then breakfast; work, and converse with my company till about twelve; then, if the weather permit, walk a mile in the garden; dress, and read till dinner; after which, sit and chat till four: from that to the hour of tea drinking, each day, variety of employments. You know what the men say, enters with the tea-table; though I will venture to declare, if mine is not an exception, it is as near one as you can imagine.

Here books take place, which I often read to the company; and sometimes we all have our particular studies (Sir Roger always has his,) which we seldom forsake till the bell warns to supper; after which we have always something to do. We eat fruit, crack nuts, perhaps jokes; now and then music takes place. This is our regular scheme, though it is often broken into, with company and variety of incidents; some pleasing, some otherwise: domestic affairs, too, call for a share of one's time. I know not what the fine ladies mean, when they complain of having too much time; for, I thank God, Barnaby Bright is not too long for me. How should I be despised in the parish of St. James's, if they were to know, that, at this time, I glory in the humble title of a cow-doctor! But no matter, if I can do good, I can bear their contempt, and return it to them with interest.

I am afraid, Sir, I have given you too much trouble about the poor Magdalen. She is only qualified to wait upon an unmarried lady, or one who has a housekeeper, for she understands nothing of house-keeping; but, where needle-work, dressing, and getting up fine linen, are required, I believe she would give satisfaction.

I wish to heaven, with you, Sir, that you could, as I do, make time, or that I could give you some of mine. I want only power to send you a present which I would allow you to call bountiful. It should be another box—a contrast to Pandora's. Time, health, and happiness, should it contain, and these only as leaders to a greater treasure: for, in the bottom, you should find a plain, though distant, prospect of eternal bliss. But, though I am poor in power, accept it in sincerest wishes from, good Mr. Richardson, your, &c.

LETTER CCXXIX.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

Dear Madam,

You do not approve of great learning in women. Learning in women may be either rightly or wrongly placed, according to the uses made of it by them. And if the sex is to be brought up with a view to make the individuals of it inferior in knowledge to the husbands they may happen to have, not knowing who those husbands are, or what, or whether sensible or foolish, learned or illiterate, it would be best to keep them from writing and reading, and even from the knowledge of the common idioms of speech. Would it not be very pretty for parents on both sides to make it the first subject of their inquiries, whether the girl, as a recommendation, were a greater fool, or more ignorant, than the young fellow; and if not, that they should reject her, for the booby's sake?—and would not your objection stand as strongly against a preference in mother-wit in the girl, as against what is called learning; since linguists, (I will not call all linguists, learned men,) do very seldom make the figure in conversation that even girls, from sixteen to twenty, make.

If a woman has genius, let it take its course, as well as in men; provided she neglect not any thing that is more peculiarly her province. If she has good sense, she will not make the man she chooses, who wants her knowledge, uneasy, nor despise him for that want. Her good sense will teach her what is her duty; nor will she want reminding of the tenor of her marriage vow to him. If she has not, she will find a thousand ways to plague him, though she knew not one word beyond her mother-tongue, nor how to write, read, or speak properly in that. The English, Madam, and particularly what we call the plain English, is a very copious and a very expressive language.

But, dear Madam, does what you say in the first part of the paragraph under my

my eye, limiting the genius of women, quite cohere with the advantages which, in the last part, you tell me they have over us?—"Men do well," you say, "to keep women in ignorance:" but this is not generally intended to be the case, I believe. Girls, I think you formerly said, were compounded of brittle materials. They are not, they cannot be trusted to be sent abroad to seminaries of learning, as men are. It is necessary that they should be brought up to a knowledge of the domestic duties. A young man's learning-time is from ten to twenty-five, more or less. At fifteen or sixteen, a girl starts into woman; and then she throws her purveying eyes about her: and what is the learning she is desirous to obtain?—Dear lady, discourage not the sweet souls from acquiring any learning that may keep them employed, and out of mischief, and that may divert them from attending to the whisperings within them, and to the flatteries without them, till they have taken in a due quantity of ballast, that may hinder them, all their sails unfurled and streamers flying, from being overset at their first entrance upon the voyage of life.

I am charmed with your Ladyship's obliging account of your daily employments and amusements. Now do I know at what different parts of the day to obtrude myself. I was not very well this morning. My people neglected me. I was at Haigh, in half a second, and did myself the honour of breakfasting there. But became the more miserable for it; for O how I missed you, on my re-transportation!—yet I the sooner recovered myself when I looked up to you and to your dear Sir Roger, in the picture.—Yet the piercing cold, and the surrounding snow, and my hovered-over fire side, reminded me, that the piece before me was but a picture. In summer, if it please God to spare me till then, it will be more than a picture. I will then throw myself into your morning walks; and sometimes perhaps you shall find me perched upon one of your pieces of ruins, symbolically to make the ruin still more complete. In hopes of which, I am, &c.

LETTER CCXXX.

The same to the same.

But what a sad thing say you, my dear lady, that these sober men will not put on the appearance of rakes!—Silly creatures! when they know what would do!—Can't they learn to curse and swear in jest? and be good, and true, and faithful, just when a lady wants them to be good, and true, and faithful?—But you would be content, if the good men would dress, only dress, like rakes—But, hold! On looking back to your Ladyship's letter, I find the words dress and address: "The good "man need only to assume the dress and "address of the rake, and you will wa-"ger ten to four that he will be prefer-"red to him." Will you be pleased, Madam, to give me particulars of the taking dress of a rake? Will you be pleased to describe the address with which the ladies in general shall be taken?—The rake is, must be, generally, in dress a coxcomb; in address, a man of great assurance: thinking highly of himself, meanly of the sex; he must be past blushing, and laugh at those who are not. He must flatter, lie, laugh, sing, caper, be a monkey, and not a man. And can a good man put on these appearances? We have heard that the devil has transformed himself into an angel of light, to bring about his purposes; but never that an angel of light borrowed a coat and waistcoat of the devil, for any purpose whatever. And must the good man thus debase himself, to stand well with the fair sex?

"To reform Lovelace for Clarissa's "sake!"—Excellent ladies!—Unbounded charity!—Dear souls! How I love your six forgiving charmers!—But they acknowledge this, I hope, only among themselves!—If there are any Lovelaces of their acquaintance, I hope they give not to them such an indirect invitation to do their worst, in order to give themselves an opportunity to exercise one of the brightest graces of a Christian.

Well, but for fear I should be called scurrilous again, let me see how your Ladyship explains yourself.—"A man "may DESERVE the name of a rake, "without being QUITE an *abandoned* "*profligate*; as a man may sometimes "err [illegible]

"drink A LITTLE TOO MUCH without "being *a sot.*"

And, were I to attempt to draw a good man, are these, Madam, the outlines of his character? Must he be a moderate rake?—Must he qualify himself for the ladies' favour by taking any liberties that are criminal? Only taking care that he stop at a few; "that he "be not QUITE an *abandoned profligate!* "that though he may now and then "drink a little too much, yet that he "stop short of the SOT!"—O my dear Lady Bradshaigh—and am I scurrilous for saying, that there is no such thing, at least that it is very difficult, so to draw a good man, that he may be thought agreeable to the ladies in general?

Did I ever tell you, Madam, of the contention I had with Mr. Cibber, about the character of a good man, which he undertook to draw, and to whom, at setting out, he gave a mistress, in order to shew the virtue of his hero in parting with her, when he had fixed upon a particular lady, to whom he made honourable addresses? A male-virgin, said he—ha, ha, ha, hah! when I made my objections to the mistress, and she was another man's wife, too, but ill used by her husband; and he laughed me quite out of countenance!—And it was but yesterday, in company, some of which he never was in before, that he was distinguishing upon a moderate rake, (though not one word has he seen or heard of your Ladyship's letter, or notion,) by urging, that men might be criminal without being censurable!—A doctrine that he had no doubt about, and to which he declared that none but divines and prudes would refuse to subscribe to! —Bless me, thought I!—and is this knowing the world?—What an amiable man was Mr. B——, in Pamela, in this light!

But I have this comfort, upon the whole, that I find the good man's character is not impracticable; and I think Mr. Cibber, if I can have weight with him, shall undertake the arduous task. He is as gay and as lively at seventy-nine as he was at twenty-nine; and he is a sober man, who has seen a great deal, and always dressed well, and was noted for his address, and for his success, too, on two hundred and fifty occasions, —a little too many, I doubt, for a moderate rake: but then his long life must be considered. I wish we could fix upon the number of times a man might be allowed to be overcome with wine, without being thought a sot. Once a week? Once a fortnight? Once a month? How shall we put it? Youth will have its follies. Why—but I will not ask the question I was going to ask, lest I should provoke your Ladyship beyond your strength.

Dear, dear Madam, let me beg of you to make your own virtuous sentiments and behaviour in life, which render you equally beloved and revered by all who have the honour to know you, the standard of virtue for all your sex. When you extend your charity too far, and allow for what is, rather than insist upon what should be, in cases of duty and of delicacy, my love for the sex makes me apply to your Ladyship's words—"you "provoke me beyond my strength."

Just this moment came in my wife. (Thursday morning, eleven.)—O, Betsy, said I, begone! Ask me not what I am writing; I have been cutting your dear lady all to pieces.—Dear good lady! said she; never will I forgive you, then. Then looking at you over the chimney, with an eye of love, and my eye following her's, you can be but in jest, said she! Pray make my best compliments to her Ladyship, and to her Sir Roger. With which I conclude, &c.

LETTER CCXXXI.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North End, Dec. 26, 1751.

EVER obliging Lady Bradshaigh! And was it, could it be, five weeks, almost six, before I paid my duty to my dearest correspondent?—How proud do you make me by your reproaches! You tell me you are angry with me! the first time I have been able to make you so.—Yet, sweet bee of Hybla! how you sting, when you tell me, that you suppose I would make no excuses for my long silence, because I would not allow of white fibs in myself!—O my Lady! how could you, and in the same sentence in which you were gracious?—but how can I cry out, though hurt, when I revolve the friendly, the condescending, the indulgent motive?

You

You have seen in the papers, I suppose, that our friend is married; may he be happy! most cordially I wish for it. Not only because he is our friend, but because he is our fellow-creature. "Much depends upon the lady; and "common sense will not be sufficient to "make him so.—She must have sense "enough to make him see, that she "thinks him her superior in sense," as you once told me. Proud mortal! and vain!—And cannot he be content with the greater pride, as a man of sense would think it, to call a richer jewel than he had before, his, while he is all his own!—But, such is the nature of woman, if she be not a vixen indeed, that if the man sets out right with her; if he lets her early know that he is her lord, and that she is but his vassal; and that he has a stronger sense of his prerogative than of her merit and beauty; she will succumb: and, after a few struggles, a few tears, will make him a more humble, a more passive wife, for his insolent bravery, and high opinion of himself. I am sorry to say it, but I have too often observed, that fear, as well as love, is necessary, on the lady's part, to make wedlock happy; and it will generally do it, if the man sets out with asserting his power and her dependence. And now will your Ladyship rise upon me! I expect it. And yet you have yourself allowed the case to be thus, with regard to this husband and his wife.

The struggle would be only at first: and if a man would be obstinate, a woman would be convinced, or seem to be so, and very possibly think the man more a man for his tyranny, and value herself when he condescended to praise, or smile upon her.

I have as good a wife as man need to wish for. I believe your Ladyship thinks so.—Yet—shall I say, O Madam! women love not King Logs!—The dear creature, without intending contradiction, is a mistress of it. She is so good as to think me, among men, a tolerably sensible one; but that is only in general; for, if we come to particulars, she will always put me right, by the superiority of her own understanding. But I am even with her very often. And how, do you ask, Madam? why, by giving up my will to her's; and then the honest soul is puzzled what (in a doubtful case) to resolve upon. And, in mere pity to her puzzlings, I have let her know my wishes; and then, at once, she resolves, by doing the very contrary to what she thinks them to be. And here, again, I am now and then, but not often, too hard for her.—And how?—You guess, my Lady.—Need I say, that it is by proposing the very contrary to what I wish;—but so much for King Log and his frog. How apt are we to bring in our own feelings, by head and shoulders, as the saying is, when we are led to it by cases either similar or opposite to our own!

But one word more of the gentleman, if you please. He may already, if not confoundedly tired of beauty (sameness is a confounded thing to a lover of variety) be growing prudent: since, I am told, that he begins to think of retiring somewhere, in order to save expense.

I was sure your Ladyship would be pleased with the generosity of my hero, as shewn in the two letters I sent you. You blame me for not thinking of publishing in my life-time. You deny me assistance; you depend upon the poor old woman's blinking light; yet I wish I had had the flash of your torch to light me. If, in boisterous weather a flambeau will not stand it, what can a rush-light do?

Your Ladyship asks me if I would publish, if my writing ladies would give me each a letter? Remember, say you, "that we have you in our power." Well, Madam! then you will allow me to stop till you do.

Tell you sincerely, which do I think, upon the whole, men or women, have the greatest trials of patience, and which bears them the best? You mean, you say, from one sex to the other only?—What a question is here. Which? why women, to be sure. Man is an animal that must bustle in the world, go abroad, converse, fight battles, encounter other dangers of seas, winds, and I know not what, in order to protect, provide for, maintain, in ease and plenty, women. Bravery, anger, fierceness, occasionally, are made familiar to them. They buffet, and are buffeted by the world; are impatient and uncontrolable. They talk of honour, and run their heads against stone walls, to make good their pretensions to it; and often quarrel with one another, and fight duels, upon any other silly thing that happens to raise their choler; with their shadows, if you please.

While women are meek, passive, good creatures, who, used to stay at home, set their maids at work, and, formerly themselves—get their houses in order, to receive, comfort, oblige, give joy to, their fierce, fighting, bustling, active protectors, providers, maintainers—divert him with pretty pug's tricks, tell him soft tales of love, and of who and who's together, and what has been done in his absence—bring to him little master, so like his own dear papa, and little pretty miss, a soft, sweet, smiling soul, with her sampler in her hand, so like what her meek mamma was at her years! And with these differences in education, nature, employments, your Ladyship asks, whether the man or the woman bears more from each other? Has the more patience? Dearest lady! how can you be so severe upon your own sex, yet seem to persuade yourself that you are defending them?

What you say of a lover's pressing his mistress to a declaration of her love for him, is sweetly pretty, and very just; but, let a man press as he will, if the lady answers him rather by her obliging manners than in words, she will leave herself something to declare, and she will find herself rather more than less respected for it: such is the nature of man!—A man hardly ever presumes to press a lady to make this declaration, but when he thinks himself sure of her. He urges her, therefore, to add to his own consequence; and hopes to quit scores with her, when he returns love for love, and favour for favour: and thus "draws the tender-hearted soul to "professions which she is often upbraided for all her life after," says your Ladyship. But these must be the most ungenerous of men. All I would suppose, is, that pride and triumph is the meaning of the urgency for a declaration which pride and triumph make a man think unnecessary; and perhaps to know how far he may go, and be within allowed compass. A woman, who is brought to own her love to the man, must act accordingly towards him; must be more indulgent to him; must, in a word, abate of her own significance, and add to his. And have you never seen a man strut upon the occasion, and how tame and bashful a woman looks after she has submitted to make the acknowledgement? The behaviour of each to the other, upon it and after it, justifies the caution to the sex, which I would never have a woman forget—always to leave to herself the power of granting something; yet her denials may be so managed as to be more attractive than her compliances. Women, Lovelace says, and he pretends to know them, are fond of ardours; but there is an end of them when a lover is secure. He can then look about him, and be occasionally, if not indifferent, unpunctual, and delight in being missed, expected, and called to tender account, for his careless absences; and he will be less and less solicitous about giving good reasons for them, as she is more and more desirous of his company. Poor fool! he has brought her to own that she loves him: and will she not bear with the man she loves? She, herself, as I have observed, will think she must act consistently with her declaration; and he will plead that declaration in his favour, let his neglects or slights be what they will. Your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXXII.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

January 3, 1752.

I HOPE I shall never be more angry with my valuable correspondent than I appeared to be in my last letter, though you love to make me angry, and you know how vindictive a heart I have: therefore do not provoke me too far. Remember, a woman is never behindhand in revenge; and how do you think I mean to complete it? even by keeping my temper. If that does not vex you, I know nothing that will.

You ask, "how could I sting, and be "so gracious in the same sentence?" Why, because I expected something in answer that would please me, and I was not disappointed. May I never want a sting to draw such honey from your pen.

Can I, do I, "engage your delight "with your attention?" May I ever do so; and, I will take upon me to say, I shall never owe you a grain on that score.

Do you really think, Sir, that "prerogative from your sex to our's, early "exerted in the married state, will sink "most women into mere humble passive "wives?" How is this, "if he sets "out right?"—Right! right! do you call

call it? Much depends upon the various tempers on both sides. Without being a vixen, indeed, a woman may behave with dignity, and with duty, and, at the same time, despise the man who is mean enough to remind her of his prerogative, and that she is his vas.... —What is the ugly word?—I do not understand it.—Why will you write Greek to the unlearned? And ignorant I may remain; for the man whose happy wife I am, as he never has explained it, would not willingly do it, were I to ask him. Insolent bravery, however, is plain English, and very properly applied. You have "too often "observed (too often, indeed, if ever) "that fear as well as love is necessary, "on the lady's part, to make wedlock "happy." I deny not that you may have observed, that a man, by setting out right or wrong, by insolent bravery, and a high opinion of himself, may make fear necessary: nevertheless, it is a necessity of his own creating, and not from the nature of woman.

What would have become of me, had I married a man who would have endeavoured to lay me under that necessity? Endeavoured, I say; for the bravest, and the most insolent of your insolent sex, could never have brought me to it. I am such a vixen, that, if I loved my husband, I could not fear him. A governor, a parent, a master, I could love, fear, and honour, at the same time; but to my husband, myself, I must be all love, no mixture of fear; certain hatred would attend it.

How can it be said, what would be the way with most women? Where there are variety of tempers, there ought to be, and you have the power to use, variety of methods. But prerogative is the word, and insolence the motive; whilst we have no choice; submission, submission for ever, or we are vixens, perverse opposers, rebels to our sovereigns, to our tyrants—too often synonimous terms. And yet, I will so far allow your observation, that some of us do seem to submit with pleasure to these sovereigns: but then, in my way of thinking, it must be a submission of love, to be called happy in the least degree; not a dispirited fear, like a —— What is the meaning of that Greek word? I have a notion it is something like servitude: O, ay: 'Love, serve, honour, and 'obey.' No fear, though, is mentioned; thank God, for that; since, if there had, I should certainly have broke my marriage vow, one way or the other. There is something of chaste conversation coupled with fear, but it is no command.

Surely, no woman of common sense could be "convinced the sooner, for a "man's obstinacy" in using her ill; or think him "more a man" for being a tyrant. A fool, a brute, may be a tyrant; and, if a woman is not of the same silly stamp, she must despise him, however he may have brought her to a seeming easiness. We have nothing else for it, when a man is resolved. But then you cannot call it making wedlock happy: hell, indeed, Sir; this world's hell, I call it. There are, who expect their wives to love, serve, honour, and obey, only because they have vowed so to do; but what men are they? And what woman could value such from her heart, or be happy with such a man?—When love is reciprocal, sweet is the bondage, and easy the yoke; where that is, nothing is wanting; for ever banished be fear, the bane of happiness in every shape; at least with one of my temper. We may be fond of power, and it is often our own fault that we have not enough of it: a woman that can seem to despise it, may have it to satiety. And what does this argue? You perverse souls, what does it argue?

I do believe, Sir, you have as good a wife as any man "need to wish for;" and yet—What would you say? Nay, you have said. I will tell, I am resolved. Mrs. R——n, he says you are a mistress of contradiction. In close argument, you give him to understand that you think your judgment superior; that, when you have brought him to declare his wishes, you at once resolve to act directly opposite. Are these things so? Positively, they are not. I cannot believe it, indeed, Sir. I am very sure you would not utter a falsehood, black or white; nevertheless, I cannot believe it. There is some misconstruction; some words, or tone of voice, wrong understood; mistakes on one side or the other: but, in short, she appears to me grossly abused. And yet that cannot be, by the man in whom is no abuse. I know not how to behave between you: if I take her part, she will quarrel with me, I am sure; and if I take your's, so will you too. The third person in matrimonial disputes always comes off the worst. So God bless

you

you both! and I advise you to go on in the same way, lest you should change for the worse.

Have you but *now* found out the way to make me an advocate for my sex? You forget, Sir, the same thing has happened before. I believe we have both owned that we love a little contradiction, as a spur to each other. So I am not only like "my wife," but like my wife's husband. In short, and seriously, we are all like one another, in some degree:—if faults we have, we had them from you. I know a gentleman, who, when he was speaking of any one who had the misfortune to be born of wicked parents, always said, "I have no opinion of him; he is "made of bad stuff." And this puts me in mind of our original, the *rib*, the *rib!* And there's a *bone* for you to pick! Pardon the pun, and pertness.

No, Sir, I cannot hope that what I have said will amount to a proof of women's superiority, in goodness, to men; any more than I hope for an acknowledgment of it without a proof. Nevertheless, as you have more power, and do very often abuse that power, we, without doubt, have more to bear from you, than you from us. Without doubt, I say; because you cannot make me believe otherwise.

And have I, do you think, "been severe "upon my own sex, yet seem to persuade "myself that I was defending them?"

What a blundering brain have I! For ever producing dirt to be thrown in my own face! Though, please to hold your hand a little, for I am not yet sensible of what you accuse me. If any being but man could speak, I would allow that being to talk of women's consciences.

I once had some small acquaintance with Lord Orrery, at the time when he was in disgrace with his father, his doating father, as you gently term him—for he had not so just an excuse as dotage, for his behaviour to his son.

Your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

North End, Feb. 23, 1752.

I KNEW that I should provoke my dear correspondent, by what I wrote of men's setting out right in the marriage warfare; of governing by fear; of prerogative early exerted; and such like strange assertions. But, in the first place, you will be pleased to recollect to whom all this jargon is owing. Is it not to Lady B. herself? Look back, Madam, for the occasion, which was our friend ————'s nuptials: and what a passive, tame soul, you supposed his wife must be, if she wished to be happy. On this, my indignation arose against tyrants; and I gave it as my opinion, that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured husband, who made it his study to oblige his wife: and angry, very angry, was I, against such of the sex, as would, either way, give reason for the observation. Had I not been a lover of your wayward sex, I should not have been so warm against them as you take it I was.

Your Ladyship very happily expresses yourself, when you say, "a governor, a "parent, a master, I could love, fear, "and honour, at the same time: but, to "my husband, myself, I must be all love, "no mixture of fear; certain hatred "would attend it." A husband was formerly thought a governor; you have heard or read that he was called master: he is dearer than a parent, and nearer too. Be pleased to tell me, Madam, why fear should mingle with your love to an indulgent parent, and produce hatred to a husband? Will you be pleased to shew me in what the two sorts of fear, if two sorts there be, differ? As to the words myself, my husband, myself, they have a pretty sound with them; but they will be found very separable words. In short, that the solemn office that has made them one flesh, has not been able, even in very material cases, to make them one spirit; and, when they differ, if there be not a fear of offending, God help them! God help *the myself!*

"While they behold their chaste con-"versation, coupled with fear." That text had like to have overturned all your Ladyship's reasoning; and how came you off? Prettily enough; because you were resolved to come off, and could easily convince yourself. It is no command, say you. But, Madam, it is almost as bad for your argument, for it is a supposed unquestionable duty: yet I plead not for fear. My maxim is love, all love; and yet, when a woman is used to it, she expects it, and so considers it

not

not either as a rarity or an obligation. The man is a quiet, good-natured creature, and loves his peace, and so is loving for his own sake. Strange humility that, which will make a woman think that she can repay the obligation by her acceptance of it! One thing, however, Madam, let me tell you, that, in all our arguments of this nature, I will not allow you to look at home, and determine by yourself. You can know nothing of the world, nor of the argument, if you form your conclusions upon the conduct of a single pair.

And when I have mentioned my wife and *her myself*, it is not that I would reflect upon her, as either designing to be contradictory, or as being unusually so. No, Madam, she falls into it naturally, as I may say, and as if she could not help it. And as *her myself* always prefaces his requests as if he would take her compliances as favours, he often finds it is but asking for a denial; and why? Because she would demonstrate that she has as great an aversion to the word fear as the best of her sex; and hesitates not to oppose, as an argument of her fortitude and independence of will. But what will you, who are so vehement against the word and thing, fear, say, if I should assert, that there cannot be love without fear! You say, you could fear a parent, yet honour and love that parent; I would rather, methinks, be the father than the husband of the woman, who could not fear me with the same sort of fear that she could shew to a fond and indulgent parent. And there, to return your Ladyship's words, is a bone for you to pick!

I do not perfectly understand you, Madam, in the following sentence: "We "may be fond of power; and it is often "our own fault that we have not enough "of it. A woman that can seem to de"spise it, may have it to satiety. And "what does this argue? You perverse "souls, what does it argue?"

Again, your Ladyship is a little unintelligible:—"If faults we have (as if 'you made a question of it, Madam!) "we have them from you.—And this "puts me in mind of our original: the "rib, the rib." I thought it was Eve that gave the man the apple. I have not my Bible at hand: but I think I remember some such words as these of an apostle: "Adam was not deceived; but the wo"man, being deceived, was in the trans"gression."—"You have more to bear "from us, you say, than we have from "you."—To this I wrote largely in my last.

You have not, Madam, a blundering brain: and I hope I have not thrown dirt in my correspondent's face.

Your Ladyship dares me to stop in my new work! You give me leave to stop. Your challenge, perhaps, comes in a critical time; for I am at a part, that it is four chances to one I shall not be able to get over. You cannot imagine how many difficult situations I have involved myself in. Entanglement, and extrication, and re-entanglement, have succeeded each other, as the day the night; and now the few friends who have seen what I have written, doubt not but I am stuck fast. And, indeed, I think so myself.

I have read through Lord Orrery's History of Swift. I greatly like it. I had the pleasure of telling my Lord himself so, in Mr. Millar's shop, and of thanking him for the pleasure he had given me. He returned the compliment, in relation to Clarissa; and, having heard of my new design, was inquisitive about it. Though my Lord is really in his person and behaviour, as well as in his writings, an amiable man, I join with your Ladyship most cordially in all you say of the author, of the Dean, and of the Dean's savage behaviour to his unhappy wife, and Vanessa; as it is of a piece with all those of his writings, in which he endeavours to debase the human, and to raise above it the brutal nature. I cannot think so hardly as some do of Lord Orrery's observation; that the fearful deprivation, which reduced him to a state beneath that of the merest animal, seemed to be a punishment that had terrible justice in it.

Why will you so ungratefully depreciate a pen and a judgment that every one, to whom I have read detached parts of your favours to me, admires? Take care, Madam, how you make light of talents, of which, while you think meanly, you are not likely to be duly thankful for. Your judgment of the works you have remarked upon are, by all who have heard me read them, thought admirable; and shew a heart, as well as a head, for which you cannot be too grateful.

I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of Amelia. Poor

Fielding! I could not help telling his sister, that I was equally surprised at and concerned for his continued lowness. Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a spunging-house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception, that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low, in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people? A person of honour asked me, the other day, what he could mean, by saying, in his Covent Garden Journal, that he had followed Homer and Virgil, in his Amelia. I answered, that he was justified in saying so, because he must mean Cotton's Virgil Travestied; where the women are drabs, and the men scoundrels.

Your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

April 22, 1752.

A SENTIMENT, my dear and good Lady Bradshaigh, may not be absolutely unexceptionable, and yet be very happily expressed. My meaning and my words agreed, when I wrote, that you very happily expressed yourself on the subject of love and fear, as applicable to a parent and a husband.

But you are at a loss how to make me understand you as to the two sorts of fear which you want to distinguish, the one to a parent, the other to a husband. Awe, the word awe, is happily thought of by your Ladyship. "Are we not "bred up with awe to a parent? (you "ask). Certainly, say you; and it is "often created by our being sensible we "are liable to be corrected." So, Madam, a wife (and who is perfect? who wants not some correction?) having no apprehension of being corrected, of being chidden, therefore, cannot fear her husband, as when a child she could a parent! You have most charmingly strengthened my argument: I thank you, Madam. Did I not say, that a mixture of fear with the love was necessary to make an obliging wife? And do you not hint, that, if the wife had the same motive for it as the child had, fear of rebuke, of chastisement, of correction, (by which I mean not stripes, you may be sure—indulgent parents maintain not their authority by stripes,) the husband might be entitled to the same kind of awe that the parent was; and it would be no discredit to the grown-up woman, the wife, to be as much afraid of offending a kind, a good husband, as, when a child, she was of offending a kind, an indulgent parent? I was not wrong, therefore, I think, when I asked your Ladyship why fear should mingle with your love of an indulgent parent, (for that was the parent I meant, and not the severe one,) and produce hatred to a husband? You will answer me as above. Your Ladyship knows your answer. The wife has no apprehension of being corrected; if chidden, she can chide again. Nor, as your Ladyship seems to have proved, was I much out of the way, when I observed, from what your Ladyship said of the temper of your then lately-married friend, though I said it with indignation against such tyrant husbands, that such would be much more likely to be observed, than the kind, good-natured man, who made it his study to oblige his wife. Upon the whole, if your Ladyship will give me leave, I will assert, that there hardly can be love without fear—fear of offending. And I repeat, "that I would rather be "the father than the husband of the "woman who could not fear me with the "same sort of fear that she could shew "to a fond and indulgent parent." Why, Madam, I can, on the same motives, fear my wife: but, I am not sure, good creature, good wife, as she really is, that I have shewn my prudence in letting her see my fear.

But you say that the woman is under no obligation to her husband for his love, provided she loves. With all my heart, Madam; I will not make distinctions; I will not say that there is a merit in the man's love to a single object, on a supposition that the law of nature discourages not polygamy, and that the law of God no where in his word condemns it. No, I will not; because the law of his country ought to determine him. Why, why, would your Ladyship throw out bones for so spiteful, so vengeful, a man to pick? But may I not ask, that, if the man who loves, loves for his own sake, whether the

woman

woman who loves, loves not also the man chiefly for her's? Yes, says your Ladyship, methinks: and so the obligation is equal: so be it.

Want of perspicuity is not by any means the fault of your Ladyship's writing: yet I really did not take your meaning in the passage relating to the power that women might have if they sought it. I meant not in that place to provoke you, dearly as I sometimes love to try to make you angry with me, which yet I never could do, though I have very, very often, deserved your anger. Thus you explain yourself:

"You said, we were dear lovers of "power. I did not deny it; and I "thought it our own fault that we had "not enough of it." And have not your sex here in England enough of it? That fault is letting you see we are fond of it. Bless me, Madam, should we not feel it, if we did not see it? "For which reason, "such is your pride, you will not allow "us any, if you can help it," adds your Ladyship. If we can help it! that is power with a vengeance, which a wife exerts, and a husband cannot help himself.

"Again unintelligible (says your Lady-"ship! Fie upon you.) Why we have "faults; I made no question of it. How "should we be faultless, considering our "original? Was not woman made of "man? From whence, then, our faults?" But, Madam, be so good as to consider, that man, at the time woman was formed out of his rib, was in a state of innocence. He had not fallen. The devil had need of a helper: he soon found one in Eve. But, if I may be forgiven for a kind of pun, you seem to think, Madam, that the faults of men lie in the flesh; the faults of women are deeper—they lie in the bone. I believe you have hit upon it. I love to provoke you, it is true; but I also love to agree with your Ladyship, in material articles. The difference between us, in this point, is, that I confirm by experience what you advance only from conjecture; for, unless you look out of yourself, how should you know that women's faults lie so deep that they must be unformed, and new made up again, to amend them?

The fault of the great author, whose letters to his friend you have been reading, is, that Tully is wholly concerned for the fame of Cicero; and that for fame and for self-exaltation sake. In some of his orations, what is called his vehemence, (but really is too often insult and ill-manners,) so transports him, that a modern pleader, and yet these are often intolerably abusive, would not be heard, if he were to take the like freedoms. This difference, however, ought to be mentioned, to the honour of the antient; he generally, I believe, being governed by the justice of his cause. The moderns too seldom regard that at all; and care for nothing but their fees. But, after all, Cicero's constitutional faults seem to be vanity and cowardice. Great geniuses seldom have *small* faults.

You have seen, I presume, Dr. Middleton's Life of Cicero. It is a fine piece; but the Doctor, I humbly think, has played the panegyrist, in some places in it, rather than the historian. The present laureat's performance on the same subject, of which Dr. Middleton's is the foundation, is a spirited and pretty piece. He makes his observations on the character of Cicero, not by controverting any point with the Doctor; but, taking for granted, as if he had no other lights, every thing that the Doctor advances in his favour.

You greatly oblige me, Madam, whenever you give me your observations upon what you read. Cicero was a prodigy. His works, his genius, will be admired to the end of time. But he was the greatest, the grossest lover, courter of adulation, and one of the greatest dastards, that ever lived. Yet, in the former quality, he only spoke out what many others mean. He was fond of glory; he could not but be conscious of his very great talents. I have often quarrels, arising in my mind, against the affectation of some ingenious moderns, who are always seeking to disclaim merits, which, where they in earnest, their modesty would not permit them to publish to the world as they do in the treatises which they give the public. There may be a manly sensibility, surely, expressed, which yet may shew, that though the author of a work, or the performer of a good action, is tolerably skilled in his subject, or can take delight in his beneficence; yet that he is not proud of understanding or doing what he ought to understand or do, if he pretends to write or to act. I am not a little embarrassed in my new piece, (so I was in my two former,) with the affectation that

custom almost compels one to be guilty of:—to make my characters disclaim the merits of the good they do, or the knowledge they pretend to; and to be afraid of reporting the praises due, and given to them by others, who are benefited either by the act or the example, although the praises given are as much to the honour of the giver's sensibility, as of the receiver's. Does any body believe these disclaimers?—Does not every body think them affected, and often pharisaical? and even their pretences to modesty, are what Lovelace calls, traps laid for praise? yet custom exacts them; and who is great enough to be above custom? I think I would wish that my good man, and even my good girl, should be thought to be above regarding this custom. To receive praise with a grace, is a grace. But it must be so received, as that it should not be thought to puff up or exalt the person in his own opinion. The person praised must shew, that he is sensible he has done no more than his duty; that he gave not himself either his talents, or his ability to do good; and should be the more humble, the more thankful, for those talents, and for that ability. Arrogance, self-conceit, must be banished his heart. Even Lovelace can say, "if I have any thing valuable "as to intellectuals, those are not my "own; and to be proud of what a man is "answerable for the abuse of, and has no "merit in the right use of, is to strut, like "the jay, in a borrowed plumage."

I really think my Lord Orrery, in his Life of Swift, has intended to be laudably impartial. I have no notion of that friendship which makes a man think himself obliged to gloss over the faults of a man, whom he wishes not to have great ones. Is it not a strong proof of the sacred authority of the Scriptures, that the histories of David, Solomon, and its other heroes, are handed down to us with their mixture of vices and virtues? Lord Orrery says very high and very great things of Swift. The bad ones we knew, in part, before. Had he attempted to whiten them over, would it not have weakened the credibility of what he says in his favour? I am told, that my Lord is mistaken in some of his facts: for instance, in that, wherein he asserts that Swift's learning was a late acquirement. I am very well warranted by the son of an eminent divine, a prelate, who was for three yearts what is called his *chum*, in the following account of that fact: Dr. Swift made as great a progress in his learning, at the University of Dublin, in his youth, as any of his cotemporaries; but was so very ill-natured and troublesome, that he was made *Terræ-filius*, (Sir Roger will explain what that means, if your Ladyship is unacquainted with the University term,) on purpose to have a pretence to expel him. He raked up all the scandal against the Heads of that University that a severe inquirer, and a still severer temper, could get together into his harangue. He was expelled in consequence of his abuse, and, having his *decessit*, afterwards got admitted, at Oxford, to his degrees.

I cannot find that my Lord was very intimate with him. As from a man of quality, and the son of a nobleman who had been obnoxious to ministers, no doubt but the Dean might countenance those professions of friendship which the young Lord might be forward to make to a man who was looked upon as the genius of Ireland, and the fashion. But he could be only acquainted with him in the decline of the Dean's genius.

My Lord, I think, has partly drawn censure upon himself, by a little piece of affectation. *My friends* will, he says, by way of preface to some of the things that the friends of Swift think the severest. I was a little disgusted, as I read it, at these ill-placed assumptions of friendship in words. I thought these affectations below Lord Orrery, as it seemed, by them, as if he was proud of being thought of, as a friend, by the man, who, whatever his head was, had not, I am afraid, near so good a heart as his own.

Mr. Temple, nephew to Sir William Temple, and brother to Lord Palmerston, who lately died at Bath, declared, to a friend of mine, that Sir William hired Swift, at his first entrance into the world, to read to him, and sometimes to be his amanuensis, at the rate of 20l. a-year and his board, which was then high preferment to him; but that Sir William never favoured him with his conversation, because of his ill qualities, nor allowed him to sit down at table with him. Swift, your Ladyship will easily see by his writings, had bitterness, satire, moroseness, that must make him insufferable both to equals and inferiors, and unsafe for his superiors to countenance. Sir William

Temple

Temple was a wise and discerning man. He could easily see through a young fellow taken into a low office, and inclined to forget himself. Probably, too, the Dean was always unpolite, and never could be a man of breeding. Sir William Temple was one of the politest men of his time.

Whoever the lady be, who is so severe upon Lord Orrery, I cannot but think that she is too severe. The story of Swift's marriage, and behaviour to a worthy, very worthy wife, I have been told long before Lord Orrery's history of him came out. It was not, as the angry lady charges, a chimera, but a certain truth. And this I was informed of by a lady of goodness, and no enemy, but to what was bad in Swift. Surely this lady, who calls my Lord to account for his unchristian-like usage of a dead friend, should have shewn a little more of the Christian in her invectives. Near twenty years ago I heard from a gentleman now living, with whom Vanessa lived, or lodged, in England, an account of the Dean's behaviour to the unhappy woman, much less to his reputation than the account my Lord gives of that affair. According to this gentleman's account, she was not the creature that she became when she was in Ireland, whither she followed him, and, in hopes to make herself an interest with his vanity, threw herself into glare and expense; and, at last, by disappointment, into a habit of drinking, till grief and the effects of that vice destroyed her. You may gather from that really pretty piece of his, Cadenus and Vanessa, how much he flattered her, and that he took great pains to gloss over that affair. I remember once to have seen a little collection of letters and poetical scraps of Swift's, which passed between him and Mrs. Van Homrigh, this same Vanessa, which the bookseller then told me were sent him to be published, from the originals, by this lady, in resentment of his perfidy.

I have not had an opportunity to know what the two Doctors you mention say of Lord Orrery's Life of Swift.

Adieu, dear Madam, your's, &c.

LETTER CCXXXV.

Mr. Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

June 24, 1752.

YOUR Ladyship is sure that you love, and as sure that you do not fear. Bless me, Madam, did I not except, from my general observation, a certain baronet and his lady?

"A thoughtless irresolute child;" as if thoughtlessness and irresolution were not to be found in persons grown up!

The wife you describe, the good, the tender wife, who will never designedly offend a good, a tender husband, is not the wife I, any more than your Ladyship, thought of: the generality of the sex I had in my view. And yet I think the fear I meant very compatible with the character of a good, a tender wife; nay, she hardly can be either good or tender without it.

"Want correction equally, or in com-"parison, with a child." That, Madam, was not what I supposed, though I have known humoured wives more perverse than babies. Nor meant I that stripes should be thought of: and yet in a cause that I once heard argued in the House of Lords, between Sir Cleeve Moore and his lady, who, in resentment of his cruelty, had run away from him, and whom he had forced back, with farther instances of cruelty, I heard a very edifying debate: a cause which was managed by the present Lord Chancellor, then Attorney-General, against the late Lord Chancellor Talbot, then Solicitor-General, in which the former declaimed very powerfully against Sir Cleeve for his ill usage of his wife. The latter, allowing part of the charge, justified Sir Cleeve by the law of England, which allows a man to give his wife *moderate correction*. The house was crowded with ladies, who, some of them, shrugged their shoulders, as if they felt the correction; and all of them who could look from behind their fans, leered consciously, I thought, at one another. A pretty doctrine, thought I! Take it among you, ladies; and make your best courtesies when you come home to your emperors.

Well, but your Ladyship turns me over to St. John, who, in his first epistle, says: "There is no fear in love; but perfect "love casteth out fear, because fear hath

" torment: He that feareth, is not made " perfect in love."

Charming! And how your Ladyship exults upon this! "What will you say " to this, I wonder?"

Why, Madam, in the first place, I say that this love and this fear, as you will see in the context, are not meant to be the love or fear of an earthly creature, a husband, or that of a wife—but of God.

But when another apostle comes, from the same divine spirit, to speak of the duty of wives to husbands, he delivers himself with the authority of a precept:— " Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to " your own husbands; that if any obey not " the word, they may also, without the " the word, be won by the conversation " of the wives; while they behold your " conversation coupled with fear." This, Madam, is directly *to* wives, and *of* husbands. What now will your Ladyship say to these things? But I am meek; I exult not; no broad smile do I put on; no triumph!

A meek and quiet spirit is enjoined as the principal ornament of a wife; " for, " after this manner, (says the apostle, in " the old time,) the holy women also, who " trusted in God, adorned themselves, " being in subjection to their own hus- " bands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, " calling him lord; whose daughters ye " are, as long as you do well, and are not " afraid with any amazement." There, Madam, is the fear, that a wife should mingle with her love, described. It should be a sweet, familiar fear, looking up to him for encouragement and reward, from his smiles; and not such a one as should awe, confound, or amaze her.——So much for this subject of love and fear.

" No, Sir, says your Ladyship, never, " never will I allow, that a woman is un- " der obligations to her husband, for " returning her love; no, not for his " entire love!"—I cannot help it, Madam; you see what a state of vassalage both the Scripture and the law of the land suppose a wife to be in; and what stately creatures men are! But you know that I enforce not this vassalage, this stateliness. This argument was introduced with my declared indignation against the tyranny of a husband, who, of your own knowledge of his temper, you supposed would be a tyrant, and expect his sweetly pretty wife to be will-less. A sad thing, whatever it was of old time (in Sarah's days), when the wives were thought of little account, and the old patriarchs lorded it over half a score good, meek, obedient creatures, to deprive a woman, in these days, of her will! Whence I had the boldness to advance, that it was, however, very likely that the man would have the more obliging wife for it; and I thought your Ladyship, by giving the instance, of the same opinion. Said you not, " that humility only could " make her happy?"

Polygamy is a doctrine that I am very far from countenancing; but yet, in an argumentative way, I do say, that the law of nature, and the first command (increase and multiply), more than allow of it; and the law of God no where forbids it. Throughout the Old Testament, we find it constantly practised. Enough, however, of this subject; though a great deal more might be said; more than I wish there could, as I think highly of the laws and customs of my country. Have you, Madam, who are an admirer of Milton, read his Treatise on Divorces? You reject his authority. As a poet, do if you please: poets are allowed to be licentious. But reason ought to weigh, whether from man or woman. Do you not think so, Madam?

Bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—Why, truly, so women are—But, as the best things, corrupted, become the worst, your Ladyship would have a difficulty, if put to it, to prove, that the offspring cannot be worse, when bad, than the parent.

I have overcome, it is true, some difficulties in my new work; but what shall I do, they multiply upon me!——— Adieu, for the present.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

Lady Bradshaigh to Mr. Richardson.

July 25, 1755.

You are so kind, and so pressing, to give yourself trouble on our account, that I know not what to say to you. Sir Roger cries, That your being a man of business, and diligent in that business, is a reason why we should not add to that weight you already bear. I answer, Consider his words, and consider his sincerity. Aye, but then consider what he will endure, to serve his friends. Well, and is not

not that the business of his life, preferably to all others? Very true. And if I know him at all, the pleasure he takes in that servitude will greatly overbalance the trouble; so let us only think of giving him a pleasure, and let that solve to ourselves, like all selfish people, what perhaps would more than appear as really giving trouble to a disinterested stander-by.—And so, Sir, you are adopted our friendly, loving, trusty banker.

I have a notion that you are acquainted with honest people of every profession; therefore, you must not be surprized if I apply to you upon all occasions. And this puts me in mind of Mr. C——, who, honest and humane as he is, may, nevertheless, be the better for your acquaintance. You once told me he maintained a very odd argument; and I am informed his principles are so in the religious sense:—but if he is not one of the obstinate, and will hear reason, his correspondence with you may open his eyes, and cause a new light to shine before them.

Bless me, Sir, how you scold! I have a great mind not to bear it. I desired you would not be very angry; and I thought you would not, when I told you the true reason of my reserve. My letter, like some former ones, was left at Parsons-Green, where you answered it, or you would have been more gentle in your condemnation. Pray look it over, before you write again, and tell me if I did not say that "Miss Talbot seems very "agreeable, and deserving, and, I dare "say, is as good as you and all her "friends think her; and, that her looks "answered her character, is too well "known to need farther explanation." This you call cool praise. I do not think it so, from a stranger; for, you know, I cannot commence acquaintance all at once. You prepared Miss Talbot to expect that shyness, that unconquerable shyness, which appears so much to my disadvantage in a first visit. But you also prepared her—Ah, Sir, no rising in the second visit! However, I thank you, since I must have appeared worse, had she not been prepared, and which I am sensible of, by her expressions in my favour, of which I am vain. The diffidence she found out, pleases me; and I hope that will be an excuse for all my disagreeable and ill-timed reserves. Thus far I am willing to take blame to myself. The married lady ought to have made more advances. But the married lady, upon some occasions, is an arrant sheep's face. I can only promise to behave better for the future, and shall very much wish for an opportunity to make myself more deserving the good opinion of Miss Talbot, who, I do assure you, stands high in mine.

I have but lately finished Leland's excellent work, and your kind present. I greatly admire the plain, easy style, in which he writes. His cool, mild, and impartial arguments, to me, at least who was prepared to receive them favourably, seem strong and satisfactory: and my Lord of Bolingbroke, with all his vast capacity, but vaster assurance, he often makes appear even an idiot, and that without any glare of wit or brow-beating language, like his Lordship's, but only by explaining and undressing his ornamented, ill-designed doctrine.

I had, last post, a letter from my dear sister ———, with three enclosed from Lady S———g to her; in whose praises, perhaps, she might think me too cool: indeed, I said but little in the complimenting strain. She seems bent upon making me love her; and, if she is sincere in her professions of friendship, I do love her for that. But, from my own knowledge of her, from one hour's knowledge, what judgment could I form? Perhaps, if any, it might be to the disadvantage of the lady, and very unjustly; first appearances are often false. I have a reason, however, for hoping so, which may make me appear cool, when I am only cautious. This is not a farther excuse for my behaviour to the lady before mentioned, towards whom my heart is strongly bent, and whose character, had I never seen her, would have demanded my love and esteem. I am sure she is deserving; I hope the other is so too.

Sir Roger and I are quite alone, and the weather so extremely bad that I have not had an opportunity of even walking in the garden these three weeks, which makes this place not quite so pleasant as usual. But here I am happy, nevertheless; am pretty well in health, though I cannot say it is quite established: but I have no great cause for complaint, God be praised. I want nothing but a few of my particular friends; in the first rank of whom stands a family at Parsons Green, whose company would add

greatly to the satisfaction of their obliged, &c.

FROM THE LETTERS OF
LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Mar.

Twickenham, 1720.

I HAVE had no answer, dear sister, to a long letter that I writ to you a month ago; however, I shall continue letting you know *(de temps en temps)* what passes in this corner of the world, 'till you tell me 'tis disagreeable. I shall say little of the death of our great minister, because the papers say so much. I suppose that the same faithful historians give you regular accounts of the growth and spreading of the inoculation for the small-pox, which is become almost a general practice, attended with great success. I spend my time in a small snug set of dear intimates, and go very litle into the *grande monde*, which has always had my hearty contempt. I see sometimes Mr. Congreve, and very seldom Mr. Pope, who continues to embellish his house at Twickenham. He has made a subterranean grotto, which he has furnished with looking-glasses, and *they tell me* it has a very good effect. I here send you some verses addressed to Mr. Gay, who wrote him a congratulatory letter on the finishing his house. I stifled them here, and I beg they may die the same death at Paris; and never go further than your closet:

"Ah friend, 'tis true — this truth you lovers
"know—
"In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow;
"In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
"Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:
"Joy lives not here; to happier seats it flies,
"And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes.

"What are the gay parterre, the chequer'd shade,
"The morning bower, the ev'ning colonade,
"But soft recesses of uneasy minds,
"To sigh unheard in, to the passing winds?
"So the struck deer in some sequester'd part,
"Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart;
"There, stretch'd unseen in coverts hid from day,
"Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away."

My paper is done, and I beg you to send my lustering of what colour you please.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1721.

I HAVE already writ you so many letters, dear sister, that if I thought you had silently received them all, I don't know whether I should trouble you with any more; but I flatter myself, that they have most of them miscarried: I had rather have my labours lost, than accuse you of unkindness. I send this by Lady Lansdown, who I hope will have no curiosity to open my letter, since she will find in it, that I never saw any thing so miserably altered in my life: I really did not know her:

So must the fairest face appear,
When youth and years are flown;
So sinks the pride of the parterre,
When something over-blown.

My daughter makes such a noise in the room, 'tis impossible to go on in this heroic style. I hope yours is in great bloom of beauty. I fancy to myself we shall have the pleasure of seeing them cotoasts of the next age. I don't at all doubt but they will outshine all the little Auroras of this, for there never was such a parcel of ugly girls as reign at present. In recompence, they are very kind, and the men very merciful, and content in this dearth of charms with the poorest stuff in the world: This you'd believe, had I but time to tell you the tender loves of lord Romney and lady Carmichill; they are so fond, it does one's heart good to see them. There are some other pieces of scandal not unentertaining, particularly the earl of S****r and lady M. H*****d, who, being your acquaintance, I thought would be some comfort to you. The town improves daily, all people seem to make the best of the talent God has given 'em.

The race of Roxbourghs, Thanets, and Suffolks, are utterly extinct; and every thing appears with that edifying plain dealing, that I may say, in the words of the Psalmist, "there is no sin "in Israel."

I have

I have already thanked you for my night-gown, but 'tis so pretty it will bear being twice thanked for.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1721.

I DO verily believe, my dear sister, that this is the twelfth if not the thirteenth letter I have written since I had the pleasure of hearing from you. It is an uncomfortable thing to have precious time spent, and one's wit neglected in this manner. Sometimes I think you are fallen into that utter indifference for all things on this side the water, that you have no more curiosity for the affairs of London than for those of Pekin; and if that be the case, 'tis downright impertinence to trouble you with news. But I cannot cast off the affectionate concern I have for you, and consequently must put you in mind of me whenever I have any opportunity. The bearer of this epistle is our cousin; his shoulder knot last birth-day made many a pretty gentleman's heart ache with envy, and his addresses have made Miss Howard the happiest of her Highness's honourable virgins. I made a sort of resolution at the beginning of my letter not to trouble you with the mention of what passes here, since you receive it with so much coldness. But I find it is impossible to forbear telling you the metamorphoses of some of your acquaintance, which appear as wondrous to me as any in Ovid. Would any one believe that lady H*****ss is a beauty, and in love? And that Mrs. Anastasia Robinson is at the same time a prude and a kept mistress? And these things in spite of nature and fortune. The first of these ladies is tenderly attached to the polite Mr. M***, and sunk in all the joys of happy love, notwithstanding she wants the use of her two hands by a rheumatism, and he has an arm that he cannot move. I wish I could tell you the particulars of this amour, which seems to me as curious as that between two oysters, and as well worth the serious attention of the naturalists. The second heroine has engaged half the town in arms, from the nicety of her virtue, which was not able to bear the too near approach of Senesino in the opera; and her condescension in her accepting of lord Peterborough for her champion, who has signalised both his love and courage upon this occasion in as many instances as ever Don Quixote did for Dulcinea. Poor Senesino, like a vanquished giant, was forced to confess upon his knees that Anastasia was a nonpareil of virtue and beauty. Lord Stanhope, as dwarf to the said giant, joked on his side, and was challenged for his pains. Lord Delawar was Lord Peterborough's second; my lady miscarried—the whole town divided into parties on this important point. Innumerable have been the disorders between the two sexes on so great an account, besides half the house of peers being put under an arrest. By the providence of Heaven, and the wise cares of his majesty, no bloodshed ensued. However, things are now tolerably accommodated; and the fair lady rides through the town in the shining berlin of her hero, not to reckon the more solid advantage of 100*l.* a-month, which 'tis said he allows her. I will send you a letter by the count Caylus, whom, if you do not know already, you will thank me for introducing to you. He is a Frenchman, and no fop; which, beside the curiosity of it, is one of the prettiest things in the world.

In general, gallantry was never in so elevated a figure as at present. Twenty very pretty fellows (the duke of Wharton being president and chief director) have formed themselves into a committee of gallantry, who call themselves *Schemers;* and meet regularly three times a-week, to consult on gallant schemes for the advancement and advantage of that branch of happiness. I consider the duty of a true Englishwoman is to do honour to her native country; and that it would be a sin against the pious love I bear to the land of my nativity, to confine the renown due to the schemers within the small extent of this little island, which ought to be spread wherever men can sigh, or women can wish. 'Tis true they have the envy and the curses of the old and ugly of both sexes, and a general persecution from all *old* women; but this is no more than all reformations must expect in their beginning.

LETTER

LETTER CCXL.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1721.

Dear Sister,

I was very glad to hear from you, though there was something in your letters very monstrous and shocking. I wonder with what conscience you can talk to me of your being an old woman; I beg I may hear no more of it. For my part I pretend to be as young as ever, and really am as young as needs to be, to all intents and purposes. I attribute all this to your living so long at Chatton, and fancy a week at Paris will correct such wild imaginations, and set things in a better light. My cure for lowness of spirits is not drinking nasty water, but galloping all day, and a moderate glass of Champaigne at night in good company; and I believe this regimen, closely followed, is one of the most wholesome that can be prescribed, and may save one a world of filthy doses, and more filthy doctor's fees at the year's end. I rode to Twickenham last night, and, after so long a stay in town, am not sorry to find myself in my garden; our neighbourhood is much improved by the removal of some old maids, and the arrival of some fine gentlemen, amongst whom are lord Middleton and Sir J. Gifford, who, perhaps, are your acquaintances: they live with their aunt, lady Westmoreland, and we endeavour to make the country agreeable to one another.

Doctor Swift and Johnny Gay are at Pope's, and their conjunction has produced a ballad, which, if nobody else has sent you, I will, being never better pleased than when I am endeavouring to amuse my dear sister, and ever yours.

LETTER CCXLI.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1722.

I am very sorry, dear sister, that you are in so melancholy a way, but I hope a return to Paris will revive your spirits; I had much rather have said London, but I do not presume upon so much happiness. I was last night at the play *en famille*, in the most literal sense; my sister Gower dragged me thither in company of all our children, with Lady F. Pierrepoint at their head. My third niece Leveson, Jenny by name, will come out an errant beauty; she is really like the duchess of Queensborough. As for news, the last wedding is that of Peg Pelham, and I think I have never seen so comfortable a prospect of happiness: according to all appearance she cannot fail of being a widow in six weeks at farthest, and accordingly she has been so good a house-wife as to line her wedding-clothes with black. Assemblies rage in this part of the world; there is not a street in town free from them, and some spirited ladies go to seven in a night. You need not question but love and play flourish under these encouragements: I now and then peep upon these things with the same coolness I would do on a moving picture; I laugh at some of the motions, wonder at others, &c. and then retire to the elected few, that have ears and hear, but mouths have they and speak not. One of these chosen, to my great sorrow, will soon be at Paris; I mean Stafford, who talks of removing next April: she promises to return, but I had rather she did not go.

LETTER CCXLII.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, Oct. 20, 1723.

I am heartily sorry to have the pleasure of hearing from you lessened by your complaints of uneasiness, which I wish with all my soul I was capable of relieving, either by my letters or any other way. My life passes in a kind of indolence which is now and then awakened by agreeable moments: but pleasures are transitory, and the ground-work of every thing in England stupidity, which is certainly owing to the coldness of this vile climate. I envy you the serene air of Paris, as well as many other conveniences there: what between the things one cannot do, and the things one must not do, the time but dully lingers on, though I make as good a shift as many of my neighbours. To my great grief, some of my best friends have been extremely ill; and, in general, death and sickness have never been more frequent than now. You may imagine poor gallantry droops; and, except

cept in the elysian shades of Richmond, there is no such thing as love or pleasure. It is said there is a fair lady retired for having taken too much of it: for my part they are not at all cooked to my taste; and I have very little share in the diversions there, which, except seasoned with wit, or at least vivacity, will not go down with me who have not altogether so voracious an appetite as I once had: I intend, however, to shine and be fine on the birth-night, and review the figures there. My poor friend the young duchess of Marlborough, I am afraid, has exposed herself to a most violent ridicule; she is as much embarrassed with the loss of her expected child, and as much ashamed of it, as ever a dairy maid was with the getting one.

I desire you would say something very pretty to your daughter in my name: notwithstanding the great gulph that is at present between us, I hope to wait on her to an opera one time or other. I suppose you know our uncle Fielding is dead: I regret him prodigiously.

LETTER CCXLIII.

The same to the same.

Oct. 31, 1725.

I WRITE to you at this time piping-hot from the birth-night; my brain warmed with all the agreeable ideas that fine clothes, fine gentlemen, brisk tunes, and lively dances, can raise there. It is to be hoped that my letter will entertain you; at least you will certainly have the freshest account of all passages on that glorious day. First you must know that I led up the ball, which you'll stare at; but what is more, I believe in my conscience I made one of the best figures there; to say truth, people are grown so extravagantly ugly, that we old beauties are forced to come out on show-days, to keep the court in countenance. I saw Mrs. Murray there, through whose hands this epistle will be conveyed; I do not know whether she will make the same compliment to you that I do. Mrs. West was with her, who is a great prude, having but two lovers at a time: I think those are lord Haddington and Mr. Lindsay; the one for use, the other for show.

The world improves in one virtue to a violent degree, I mean plain-dealing. Hypocrisy being, as the Scripture declares, a damnable sin, I hope our publicans and sinners will be saved by the open profession of the contrary virtue. I was told by a very good author, who is deep in the secret, that at this very minute there is a bill cooking up at a hunting-seat in Norfolk, to have *not* taken out of the commandments and clapped into the creed, the ensuing session of parliament. This bold attempt for the liberty of the subject is wholly projected by Mr. Walpole, who proposed it to the secret committee in his parlour. William Young seconded it, and answered for all his acquaintance voting right to a man: Doddington very gravely objected, that the obstinacy of human nature was such, that he feared when they had positive commands to do so, perhaps people would not commit adultery and bear false witness against their neighbours with the readiness and cheerfulness they do at present. This objection seemed to sink deep into the minds of the greatest politicians at the board, and I don't know whether the bill won't be dropped, though it is certain it might be carried on with great ease, the world being entirely "*revenue du* "*bagatelle*," and honour, virtue, reputation, &c. which we used to hear of in our nursery, is as much laid aside and forgotten as crumpled ribands. To speak plainly, I am very sorry for the forlorn state of matrimony, which is as much ridiculed by our young ladies as it used to be by young fellows: in short, both sexes have found the inconveniences of it, and the appellation of rake is as genteel in a woman as a man of quality; it is no scandal to say miss ——, the maid of honour looks very well now; she is out again; and poor Biddy Noel has never been quite well since her last confinement. You may imagine we married women look very silly; we have nothing to excuse ourselves, but that it was done a great while ago, and we were very young when we did it. This is the general state of affairs: as to particulars, if you have any curiosity for things of that kind, you have nothing to do but to ask me questions, and they shall be answered to the best of my understanding; my time never being passed more agreeably than when I am doing something obliging to you: this is truth, in spite of all the beaus, wits, and witlings, in Great Britain.

LETTER

LETTER CCXLIV.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1725.

I AM now at the same distance from London that you are from Paris, and could fall into solitary amusements with a good deal of taste; but I resist it, as a temptation of Satan, and rather turn my endeavours to make the world as agreeable to me as I can, which is the true philosophy; that of despising it is of no use but to hasten wrinkles. I ride a good deal, and have got a horse superior to any two-legged animal, he being without a fault. I work like an angel. I receive visits upon idle days, and I shade my life as I do my tent-stitch, that is, make as easy transitions as I can from business to pleasure; the one would be too flaring and gaudy without some dark shades of t'other; and if I worked altogether in the grave colours, you know 'twould be quite dismal. Miss Skerret is in the house with me, and lady Stafford has taken a lodging at Richmond: as their ages are different, and both agreeable in their kind, I laugh with the one, or reason with the other, as I happen to be in a gay or serious humour; and I manage my friends with such a strong yet a gentle hand, that they are both willing to do whatever I have a mind to.

My daughter presents her duty to you, and service to lady Frances, who is growing to womanhood apace: I long to see her and you, and am not destitute of wandering designs to that purpose.

LETTER CCXLV.

The same to the same.

Cavendish-square, 1725.

I BELIEVE you have by this time received my letter from the hand of my lord Clare; however I love you well enough to write again, in hopes you will answer my letters one time or other. All our acquaintances are run mad; they do such things! such monstrous and stupendous things! Lady Hervey and lady Bristol have quarrelled in such a polite manner, that they have given one another all the titles so liberally bestowed amongst the ladies at Billingsgate. Sophia and I have been quite reconciled, and are now quite broke, and I believe not likely to piece up again. Ned Thompson is as happy as the money and charms of Belle Dunch can make him, and a miserable dog for all that. Public places flourish more than ever: we have assemblies for every day in the week, besides court, operas, and masquerades; with youth and money, 'tis certainly possible to be very well diverted in spite of malice and ill-nature, though they are more and more powerful every day. For my part, as it is my established opinion that this globe of ours is no better than a Holland cheese, and the walkers about in it mites, I possess my mind in patience, let what will happen; and should feel tolerably easy, though a great rat came and eat half of it up. My sister Gower has got a sixth daughter by the grace of God, and is as merry as if nothing had happened. My poor love Mr. Cook has fought and been disarmed by J. Stapleton on a national quarrel; in short, he was born to conquer nothing in England, that's certain, and has good luck neither with our ladies nor gentlemen. B. Noel is come out lady Millington, to the encouragement and consolation of all the coquets about town; and they make haste to be as infamous as possible, in order to make their fortunes. I have this moment received from Mrs. Peling a very pretty cap for my girl; I give you many thanks for the trouble you have had in sending it, and desire you would be so good to send the other things when you have opportunity. I have another favour to ask, that you would make my compliments to our English embassador when you see him. I have a constancy in my nature that makes me always remember my old friends.

LETTER CCXLVI.

The same to the same.

Twickenham, 1725.

I WROTE to you very lately, my dear sister; but ridiculous things happening, I cannot help (as far as in me lies) sharing all my pleasures with you. I own I enjoy vast delight in the folly of mankind; and, God be praised, that is an

an inexhaustible source of entertainment. I will mention to you some suspicions of my own in relation to lord B***t, which I really never mentioned to any one; but as there is never smoke without some fire, there is never fire without some smoke. These smothered flames, though admirably covered with whole heaps of politics, were at length seen, felt, heard, and understood; and the fair lady given to understand by her commanding officer, that if she shewed under other colours, she must expect to have her pay retrenched. Upon this the good lord was dismissed, and has not attended in the drawing-room since. You know one cannot help laughing, when one sees him next, and I own I long for that pleasurable moment.

I am sorry for another of our acquaintance, whose follies (for it is impossible to avoid that word) are not of a kind to give mirth to those who wish her well. The discreet and sober lady L***re has lost such furious sums at the Bath, that it may be questioned whether all the sweetness the waters can put into my lord's blood, particularly 700l. at one sitting, which is aggravated by many astonishing circumstances. This is as odd to me as my lord T——m's shooting himself; and another demonstration of the latent fire that lies under cold countenances. We wild girls always make your prudent wives and mothers.

I hear some near relations of ours are at Paris, with whom I think you are not acquainted. I mean lord Denbigh and his Dutch lady, who I am very certain has somewhat of French in her composition. She is entertaining enough,

> ——extremely gay,
> Loves music, company, and play—

I suppose you will see her.

LETTER CCXLVII.

The same to the same.

Cavendish-square, 1725.

I am always pleased to hear from you, dear sister, when you tell me you are well. I believe that you will find, upon the whole, my opinion to be right, that air, exercise, and company, are the best medicines, and physic and retirement good for nothing but to break hearts and spoil constitutions.

I am very glad to hear you mention our meeting in London. We are much mistaken here as to our ideas of Paris—to hear that gallantry has forsaken it, sounds as extraordinary to me as a want of ice in Greenland. We have nothing but ugly faces in this country, but more lovers than ever. There are but three pretty men in England, and they are all in love with me, at this present writing. This will surprise you extremely; but if you were to see the reigning girls at present, I will assure you there is little difference between them and old women.

I hear much of Mrs. Murray's despair on the death of poor Gibby, and I saw her dance at a ball where I was, two days before it happened. The duke of Kingston is in France, but is not to come to your capital. I am sorry to inform you of the death of our sister lady Gower's son of the small-pox. I think she has a great deal of reason to regret it; in consideration of the offer I made her two years together of taking the child to my house, where I would have inoculated him with the same care and safety that I did my own.

I know nobody who has hitherto repented the operation, though it has been very troublesome to some fools, who had rather be sick by the doctor's prescriptions, than in health, in rebellion to the college.

It is very true, that if I wrote to you a full account of all that passes, my letters would be both frequent and voluminous. This sinful town is very populous, and my own affairs very much in a hurry; but the same things that afforded me much matter gave me very little time, and I am hardly at leisure to make observations, much less to write them down. But the melancholy catastrophe of poor lady L*** is too extraordinary not to attract the attention of every body. After having played away her reputation and fortune, she has poisoned herself. This is the effect of prudence! All indiscreet people live and flourish. Mrs. M—— has retrieved his grace; and being reconciled to the temporal, has renounced the spiritual; and her friend lady H——, by aiming too high, has fallen very low, and is reduced to trying to persuade folks she has an intrigue, and gets no one to believe her, the man in question

question taking a great deal of pains to rid himself of the scandal. Her Chelsea grace of R—— has married her attorney. There's prudence for you!

LETTER CCXLVIII.

The same to the same.

Cavendish-square, 1727.

I CANNOT deny, but that I was very well diverted on the coronation day. I saw the procession much at my ease, in a house which I filled with my own company, and then got into Westminster-hall without trouble, where it was very entertaining to observe the variety of airs that all meant the same thing. The business of every walker there was to conceal vanity and gain admiration. For these purposes some languished and others strutted; but a visible satisfaction was diffused over every countenance, as soon as the coronet was clapped on the head. But she that drew the greatest number of eyes, was indisputably lady Orkney. She exposed behind a mixture of fat and wrinkles; and before, a very considerable protuberance which preceded her. Add to this, the inimitable roll of her eyes, and her grey hairs which by good fortune stood directly upright, and 'tis impossible to imagine a more delightful spectacle. She had embellished all this with considerable magnificence, which made her look as big again as usual; and I should have thought her one of the largest things of God's making if my lady St. J***n had not displayed all her charms in honour of the day. The poor duchess of M***se crept along with a dozen of black snakes playing round her face; and my lady P***nd (who is fallen away since her dismission from court) represented very finely an Egyptian mummy embroidered over with hieroglyphics. In general, I could not perceive but that the old were as well pleased as the young; and I, who dread growing wise more than any thing in the world, was overjoyed to find that one can never outlive one's vanity. I have never received the long letter you talk of, and am afraid that you have only fancied that you wrote it. Adieu, dear sister; I am affectionately yours.

LETTER CCXLIX.

The same to the same.

Cavendish-square, 1727.

MY lady Stafford set out towards France this morning, and has carried half the pleasures of my life along with her; I am more stupid than I can describe, and am as full of moral reflections as either Cambray or Pascal. I think of nothing but the nothingness of the good things of this world, the transitoriness of its joys, the pungency of its sorrows, and many discoveries that have been made these three thousand years, and committed to print, ever since the first presses. I advise you, as the best thing you can do that day, let it happen as it will, to visit lady Stafford: she has the goodness to carry with her a true born English-woman, who is neither good nor bad, nor capable of being either; lady Phil Pratt by name, of the Hamilton family, and who will be glad of your acquaintance, and you can never be sorry for hers.

Peace or war, cross or pile, makes all the conversation; the town never was fuller, and, God be praised, some people *brille* in it who *brilled* twenty years ago. My cousin Buller is of that number, who is just what she was in all respects when she inhabited Bond-street. The sprouts of this age are such green withered things, 'tis a great comfort to us grown up people: I except my own daughter, who is to be the ornament of the ensuing court. I beg you would exact from lady Stafford a particular of her perfections, which would sound suspected from my hand; at the same time I must do justice to a little twig belonging to my sister Gower. Miss Jenny is like the duchess of Queensberry both in face and spirit. *A propos* of family affairs: I had almost forgot our dear and amiable cousin lady Denbigh, who has blazed out all this winter; she has brought with her from Paris cart-loads of ribband, surprising fashion, and of the last edition, which naturally attracts all the she and he fools in London; and accordingly she is surrounded with a little court of both, and keeps a Sunday assembly to shew she has learned to play at cards, on that day. Lady Frances

F[illegible]

Fielding is really the prettiest woman in town, and has sense enough to make one's heart ache to see her surrounded with such as her relations are. The man in England that gives the greatest pleasure, and the greatest pain, is a youth of royal blood, with all his grandmother's beauty, wit, and good qualities. In short, he is Nell Gwin in person, with the sex altered, and occasions such fracas among the ladies of gallantry that it passes description. You'll stare to hear of her grace of Cleveland at the head of them. If I was poetical I would tell you—

The god of love, enrag'd to see
The nymph despise his flame,
At dice and cards his pow'r and her slights,
And slight a nobler game;

For the neglect of offers past
And pride in days of yore,
He kindles up a fire in her,
That burns her as the core.

A polish'd wife is smoothly spread
Where wholsome wrinkles lay;
And, glowing with an artful red,
She ogles at the play.

Along the Mall she softly sails,
In white and silver drest;
Her neck expos'd to Eastern gales,
And jewels on her breast.

Her children banish'd, age forgot,
Lord Sidney is her care;
And, what is much a happier lot,
Has hopes to be her *heir*.

This is all true history, though it is doggrel rhyme: in good earnest she has turned lady Barbara and family out of doors to make room for him, and there he lies like leaf-gold upon a pill; there never was so violent and so indiscreet a passion. Lady Stafford says nothing was ever like it, since Phædra and Hippolitus.—"Lord ha' mercy upon us! "see what we may all come to!"

LETTER CCL.

The same to the same.

Cavendish-square, 1727.

I TAKE this occasion of writing to you, though I have received no answer to my last; but if my letters can give you either consolation or amusement, you need never want them. I have no good opinion of sorrow in general, and think no sort of [illegible] worth cherishing. You will wonder, perhaps, that lord Gower is become a great courtier; and that there is not one tory left in England. There is something extremely risible in these affairs, but not so proper to be communicated by letter; and so I will, in an humble way, return to my domestics. I hear your daughter is a very fine young lady, and I wish you joy of it, as one of the greatest blessings of life. My girl gives me great prospect of satisfaction, but my young rogue of a son is the most ungovernable little rake that ever played truant. If I were inclined to lay wordly matters to heart, I could write a quire of complaints about it. You see no one is quite happy, though 'tis pretty much in my nature to console upon all occasions. I advise you to do the same, as the only remedy against the vexations of life; which in my conscience I think affords disagreeable things to the highest ranks, and comforts to the very lowest; so that, upon the whole, things are more equally disposed among the sons of Adam than they are generally thought to be. You see my philosophy is not so *lugubre* as yours. I am so far from avoiding company, that I seek it on all occasions; and, when I am no longer an actor upon this stage (by the way, I talk of twenty years hence at the soonest), as a spectator I shall laugh at the farcical actions which may then be represented, nature being exceedingly bountiful in all ages in providing coxcombs, who are the greatest preservatives against the spleen that I ever could find out. I say all these things for your edification; which rules, if you execute with prudence, will disperse melancholy vapours, the sure foundation of all distempers. I am, &c.

LETTER CCLI.

Lady M. W. Montagu to Mr. Wortley.

Dijon, Aug. 18, 1739, N. S.

I AM at length arrived here very safely, and without any bad accident; and so much mended in my health, that I am surprised at it. France is so much improved, it would not be known to be the same country we passed through, twenty years ago. Every thing I see speaks in praise of cardinal Fleury: the roads are

all mended, and the greater part of them paved as well as the streets of Paris, planted on both side like the roads in Holland; and such good care taken against robbers, that you may cross the country with your purse in your hand: but as to travelling *incognita*, I may as well walk *incognita* in the Pall-Mall. There is not any town in France where there are not English, Scotch, or Irish families established; and I have met with people that have seen me (though often such as I do not remember to have seen) in every town I have passed through; and I think the farther I go, the more acquaintance I meet. Here are in this town no less than sixteen English families of fashion. Lord Mansel lodges in the house with me, and a daughter of lord Bathurst's (Mrs. Whitshed) is in the same street. The duke of Rutland is gone from hence some time ago, as lady Peterborough told me at St. Omer's; which was one reason that determined me to come here, thinking to be quiet; but I find it impossible, and that will make me leave the place, after the return of this post. The French are more changed than their roads; instead of pale, yellow faces, wrapped up in blankets, as we saw them, the villages are all filled with fresh-coloured lusty peasants, in good clothes and clean linen. It is incredible what an air of plenty and content is over the whole country. I hope to hear as soon as possible that you are in good health.

LETTER CCLII.

The same to the same.

Venice, October 14, 1739.

I FIND myself very well here. I am visited by the most considerable people of the town, and all the foreign ministers, who have most of them made entertainments for me. I dined yesterday at the Spanish embassador's, who even surpassed the French in magnificence. He let me in at the hall-door, and the lady met me at the stair-head, to conduct me through the long apartment; in short, they could not have shewn me more honours if I had been an embassadress. She desired me to think myself Patrona del Casa, and offered me all the services in her power, to wait on me when I pleased, &c. They have the finest palace in Venice. What is very convenient, I hear it is not at all expected that I should make any dinners, it not being the fashion for any body to do it here, but the foreign ministers; and I find I can live here very genteelly on my allowance. I have already a very agreeable general acquaintance; though when I came, here was no one I had ever seen in my life, but the cavaliere Grimani and the abbé Conti. I must do them the justice to say they have taken pains to be obliging to me. The procurator brought his niece (who is at the head of his family) to wait on me; and they invited me to reside with them at their palace on the Brent, but I did not think it proper to accept of it. He also introduced to me the signora Pisani Mocenigo, who is the most considerable lady here. The nuncio is particularly civil to me: he has been several times to see me, and has offered me the use of his box at the opera. I have many others at my service, and in short it is impossible for a stranger to be better received than I am. Here are no English, except a Mr. Berlie and his governour, who arrived two days ago, and who intend but a short stay.

I hope you are in good health, and that I shall hear of it before you can receive this letter.

LETTER CCLIII.

The same to the same.

Florence, Aug. 11, 1740.

THIS is a very fine town, and I am much amused with visiting the gallery, which I do not doubt you remember too well to need any description of. Lord and lady Promfret take pains to make the place agreeable to me, and I have been visited by the greatest part of the people of quality. Here is an opera which I have heard twice, but it is not so fine either for voices or decorations as that at Venice. I am very willing to be at Leghorn when my things arrive, which I fear will hinder my visiting Rome this season, except they come sooner than is generally expected. If I could go from thence by sea to Naples with safety, I should prefer it to a land journey, which I am told is very difficult; and that it is impossible I should stay there long, the people

people being entirely unsociable. I do not desire much company, but would not confine myself to a place where I could see none. I have written to your daughter, directed to Scotland, this post.

LETTER CCLIV.

Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Bute.

Louvere, Nov. 1, 1749.

Dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours of August 23, and my lord Bute's obliging notice of your safe delivery at the same time. I wish you joy of your young son, and of every thing else. You do not mention your father, by which I suppose he is not returned to England, and am in pain for his health, having heard but once from him since he left it, and know not whether he has received my letters. I dare say you need not be in any doubt of his good opinion of you; for my part, I am so far persuaded of the goodness of your heart, I have often had a mind to write you a consolatory epistle on my own death, which I believe will be some affliction, though my life is wholly useless to you. That part of it which we passed together you have reason to remember with gratitude, though I think you misplace it; you are no more obliged to me for bringing you into the world, than I am to you for coming into it, and I never made use of that common-place (and like most common-place, false) argument, as exacting any return of affection. There was a mutual necessity on us both to part at that time, and no obligation on either side. In the case of your infancy, there was so great a mixture of instinct, I can scarce even put that in the number of the proofs I have given you of my love; but I confess I think it a great one, if you compare my after conduct toward you with that of other mothers, who generally look on their children as devoted to their pleasures, and bound by duty to have no sentiments but what they please to give them; play-things at first, and afterwards the objects on which they may exercise their spleen, tyranny, or ill-humour. I have always thought of you in a different manner. Your happiness was my first wish, and the pursuit of all my actions, divested of all self-interest so far. I think you ought, and believe you do, remember me as your real friend. Absence and distance have not the power to lessen any part of my tenderness for you, which extends to all yours, and I am ever your most affectionate mother, &c.

P. S. I play at whist an hour or two every afternoon. The fashion here is to play for the collation, so that the losers have at least the consolation of eating part of their money.

LETTER CCLV.

The same to the same.

April 15, N. S. 1751.

My dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours of Feb. 10th with great pleasure, as it brought me the news of your health, and that of your family. I cannot guess who you mean by lord Montfort, there being no such title when I left England, nor any lord Hertford, who I hear is named ambassador to France: these are all new people to me. I wish you would give me some information concerning them: none can be so agreeable as the continuation of your father's health; you see in him the good effect of a strict abstinence, and regular exercise. I am much pleased (but not at all surprised) at his kindness to you: I know him to be more capable of a generous action than any man I ever knew. I have never heard one word of the books that you told me were packed up last June. These things are very provoking, but fretting mends nothing. I will continue to write on, though the uncertainty of your receiving my letters is a strong abatement of my pleasure in writing, and will be of heavy consequence to my style. I feel at this minute the spirit of dullness chill my heart, and I am ready to break out into alacks and alases, with many murmurs against my cruel destiny, that will not even permit this distant conversation between us, without such allaying circumstances. However, I beg you not to be discouraged. I am persuaded, from the goodness of your heart, that you are willing to give me happiness; and I can have none here so great as a letter from you. You can never

want subjects; and I can assure you that your eldest daughter cannot be more delighted with a birth-day suit, or your youngest with a paper of sugar-plumbs, than I am at the sight of your hand. You seem very anxious on the account of your children's education. I have said all I have to say on that head; and am still of the same opinion, that learning is necessary to the happiness of women, and ignorance the common foundation of their errors, both in morals and conduct. I was well acquainted with a lady (the duchess of M***r) who, I am persuaded, owed all her misfortunes to the want of instruction in her youth. You know another, who if she had had her natural good understanding cultivated by letters, would never have mistaken Johnny Gay for a wit, and much less have printed, that he took the liberty of calling her his Laura.

I am pleasingly interrupted by the welcome information from lord Bute that you are safely delivered of a son. I am never in pain for any of that sex. If they have any merit, there are so many roads for them to meet good fortune, they can no way fail but by not deserving it. We have but one of establishing ours, and that surrounded with precipices, and perhaps after all better missed than found. I have already told you I look on my grand-daughters as lay nuns. Lady —— might avoid that destiny, if religion was not a bar to her being disposed of in this country. You will laugh to hear it, but it is really true, I had proposed to me a young man of quality, with a good estate: his parents are both dead: she would find a fine palace, and neither want jewels nor equipage; and her name (with a present from me) be thought sufficient fortune.

I shall write to lord Bute this post. My blessing to you and yours is sincerely sent from your most affectionate mother.

LETTER CCLVI.

Lady M. W. Montagu to Mr. Wortley.

Louvere, Nov 10, N. S. 1751.

I RECEIVED yours of October 10 this day, which is much quicker than any I ever had from England. I will not make any reflections on the conduct of the person you mention; 'tis a subject too melancholy to us both. I am of opinion tallying at Bassette is a certain revenue (even without cheating) to those that can get constant punters, and are able to submit to the drudgery of it; but I never knew any one pursue it long, and preserve a tolerable reputation. The news of the recovery of your health makes me amends for the displeasure of hearing his ill figure.

I have often read and been told that the air of Hungary is better, and the inhabitants in general longer lived, than in any other part of Europe. You have given me a very surprising instance of it, far surpassing in age the old woman of Louvere, though, in some circumstances, I think her story as extraordinary. She died but ten years ago; and it is well remembered by the inhabitants of that place, the most creditable of whom have all assured me of the truth of the following facts: —She kept the greatest inn there till past fifty: her husband then dying, and she being rich, she left off that trade; and having a large house, with a great deal of furniture, she let lodgings, which her daughters (two maids past seventy) still continue. I lodged with them the first year of my going to those waters. She lived to one hundred years, with good health; but in the last five years of it, fell into the decays common to that period—dimness of sight, loss of teeth, and baldness; but in her hundredth year, her sight was totally restored, she had a new set of teeth, and a fresh head of brown hair. I mentioned it to several ladies, who none of them had heard it, but the rest was confirmed to me by every body. She lived in this renewed vigour ten years, and then had her picture drawn, which has a vivacity in the eyes and complexion that would become five and twenty, though, by the falls in the face, one may discern it was drawn for a very old person. She died merely of an accident, which would have killed any other—tumbling down a very bad stone stair-case, which goes into the cellar, she broke her head in such a manner, she lived but two days. The physician and surgeon who attended her told me that her age no way contributed to her death. I inquired whether there was any singularity in her diet, but heard of none, excepting that her breakfast was every morning a large quantity of bread sopped in cold water. The common food of the peasants in this country is the Turk-

ish wheat you mention, which they dress in various manners, but use little milk, it being chiefly reserved for cheese, or the tables of the gentry. I have not observed either among the poor or rich, that in general they live longer than in England. This woman of Louvere is always spoken of as a prodigy; and I am surprised she is neither called saint nor witch, being very prodigal of those titles.

I return you many thanks for the length of your entertaining letter; but am very sorry it was troublesome to you to write it. I wish the reading of this may not be so. I will seek for a picture for lord Bute.

LETTER CCLVII.

Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Bute.

Louvere, Dec. 8, N. S. 1751.

My dear Child,

THIS town is at present in a general stare, or to use their own expression, *sotto sopra*; and not only this town, but the capital, Bergamo, the whole province, the neighbouring Brescian, and perhaps all the Venetian dominion, occasioned by an adventure exactly resembling, and I believe copied from Pamela. I know not under what constellation that foolish stuff was wrote, but it has been translated into more languages than any modern performance I ever heard of. No proof of its influence was ever stronger than this present story, which, in Richardson's hands, would serve very well to furnish out seven or eight volumes. I shall make it as short as I can.

Here is a gentleman's family, consisting of an old batchelor and his sister, who have fortune enough to live with great elegance, though without any magnificence, possessed of the esteem of all their acquaintance, he being distinguished by his probity, and she by her virtue. They are not only suffered but sought after by all the best company, and indeed are the most conversable and reasonable people in the place. She is an excellent house-wife, and particularly remarkable for keeping her pretty house as neat as any in Holland. She appears no longer in public, being past fifty, and passes her time chiefly at home with her work, receiving few visitants. This Signora Diana, about ten years since, saw, at a monastery, a girl of eight years old, who came thither to beg alms for her mother. Her beauty, though covered with rags, was very observable, and gave great compassion to the charitable lady, who thought it meritorious to rescue such a modest sweetness as appeared in her face from the ruin to which her wretched circumstances exposed her. She asked her some questions, to which she answered with a natural civility that seemed surprising; and finding the head of her family (her brother) to be a cobler, who could hardly live by that trade, she bid the child follow her home; and sending for her parent, proposed to her to breed the little Octavia for her servant. This was joyfully accepted, the old woman dismissed with a piece of money, and the girl remained with the Signora Diana, who bought her decent clothes, and took pleasure in teaching her whatever she was capable of learning. She learned to read, write, and cast accounts, with uncommon facility; and had such a genius for work, that she excelled her mistress in embroidery, point, and every operation of the needle. She grew perfecly skilled in confectionary, had a good insight into cookery, and was a great proficient in distillery. To these accomplishments she was so handy, well bred, humble, and modest, that not only her master and mistress, but every body that frequented the house took notice of her. She lived thus near nine years, never going out but to church. However, beauty is as difficult to conceal as light; her's begun to make a great noise. Signora Diana told me she observed an unusual concourse of pedling women that came on pretext to sell pennyworths of lace, china, &c. and several young gentlemen, very well powdered, that were perpetually walking before her door, and looking up at the windows. These prognostics alarmed her prudence, and she listened very willingly to some honourable proposals that were made by many honest thriving tradesmen. She communicated them to Octavia, and told her, that though she was sorry to lose so good a servant, yet she thought it right to advise her to choose a husband. The girl answered modestly, that it was her duty to obey all her commands, but she found no inclination to marriage; and if she would permit her to live single, she should think it a greater obligation than any other she could bestow. Signora Diana

was too conscientious to force her into a state from which she could not free her, and left her to her own disposal. However they parted soon after: whether (as the neighbours say) Signor Aurelio Ardinghi, her brother, looked with too much attention on the young woman, or that she herself (as Diana says) desired to seek a place of more profit, she removed to Bergamo, where she soon found preferment, being strongly recommended by the Ardinghi family. She was advanced to be first waiting-woman to an old countess, who was so well pleased with her service, she desired, on her death bed, count Jeronimo Sosi, her son, to be kind to her. He found no repugnance to this act of obedience, having distinguished the beautiful Octavia, from his first sight of her; and during the six months that she had served in the house, had tried every art of a fine gentleman, accustomed to victories of that sort, to vanquish the virtue of this fair virgin. He has a handsome figure, and has had an education uncommon in this country, having made the tour of Europe, and brought from Paris all the improvements that are to be picked up there, being celebrated for his grace in dancing, and skill in fencing and riding, by which he is a favourite among the ladies, and respected by the men. Thus qualified for conquest, you may judge of his surprise at the firm yet modest resistance of this country girl, who was neither to be moved by address, nor gained by liberality, nor on any terms would be prevailed on to stay as his housekeeper, after the death of his mother. She took that post in the house of an old judge, where she continued to be solicited by the emissaries of the count's passion; and found a new persecutor in her master, who, after three months endeavour to corrupt her, offered her marriage. She chose to return to her former obscurity, and escaped from his pursuit, without asking any wages, and privately returned to the Signora Diana. She threw herself at her feet, and, kissing her hands, begged her with tears to conceal her at least some time, if she would not accept of her service. She protested she had never been happy since she left it. While she was making these submissions, Signor Aurelio entered. She entreated his intercession on her knees, who was easily persuaded to consent she should stay with them, though his sister blamed her highly for her precipitate flight, having no reason, from the age and character of her master, to fear any violence, and wondered at her declining the honour he offered her. Octavia confessed that perhaps she had been too rash in her proceedings, but said, that he seemed to resent her refusal in such a manner as frightened her; she hoped that after a few days search he would think no more of her; and that she scrupled entering into the holy bands of matrimony, where her heart did not sincerely accompany all the words of the ceremony. Signora Diana had nothing to say in contradiction to this pious sentiment; and her brother applauded the honesty which could not be perverted by any interest whatever. She remained concealed in their house, where she helped in the kitchen, cleaned the rooms, and redoubled her usual diligence and officiousness. Her old master came to Louvere on pretence of adjusting a law-suit, three days after, and made private enquiry after her; but hearing from her mother and brother (who knew nothing of her being there) that they had never heard of her, he concluded she had taken another route, and returned to Bergamo; and she continued in this retirement near a fortnight.

Last Sunday, as soon as the day was closed, arrived at Signor Aurelio's door, a handsome equipage in a large coach, attended by four well-armed servants on horseback. An old priest stepped out of it, and desiring to speak with Signora Diana, informed her he came from the count Jeronimo Sosi, to demand Octavia; that the count waited for her at a village four miles from hence, where he intended to marry her; and had sent him, who was engaged to perform the divine rite, that Signora Diana might resign her to his care without any difficulty. The young damsel was called for, who entreated she might be permitted the company of another priest with whom she was acquainted: this was readily granted; and she sent for a young man that visits me very often, being remarkable for his sobriety and learning. Meanwhile a valet de chambre presented her with a box, in which was a complete genteel undress for a lady. Her laced linen and fine night gown were soon put on, and away they marched, leaving the family in a surprise not to be described.

Signor Aurelio came to drink coffee with me next morning: his first words were, he had brought me the history of

Pamela.

Pamela. I said, laughing, I had been tired with it long since. He explained himself by relating this story, mixed with great resentment for Octavia's conduct. Count Jeronimo's father had been his ancient friend and patron; and this escape from his house (he said) would lay him under a suspicion of having abetted the young man's folly, and perhaps expose him to the anger of all his relations, for contriving an action he would rather have died than suffered, if he had known how to prevent it. I easily believed him, there appearing a latent jealousy under his affliction, that shewed me he envied the bridegroom's happiness, at the same time he condemned his extravagance.

Yesterday noon, being Saturday, Don Joseph returned, who has got the name of parson Williams by this expedition: he relates, that when the bark which carried the coach and train arrived, they found the amorous count waiting for his bride on the bank of the lake: he would have proceeded immediately to the church; but she utterly refused it, till they had each of them been at confession; after which the happy knot was tied by the parish priest. They continued their journey, and came to their palace at Bergamo in a few hours, where every thing was prepared for their reception. They received the communion next morning, and the count declares that the lovely Octavia has brought him an inestimable portion, since he owes to her the salvation of his soul. He has renounced play, at which he had lost a great deal of time and money. She has already retrenched several superfluous servants, and put his family into an exact method of economy, preserving all the splendor necessary to his rank. He has sent a letter in his own hand to her mother, inviting her to reside with them, and subscribing himself her dutiful son: but the countess has sent another privately by Don Joseph, in which she advises the old woman to stay at Louvere, promising to take care she shall want nothing, accompanied with a token of twenty sequins, which is at least nineteen more than ever she saw in her life.

I forgot to tell you that from Octavia's first serving the old lady, there came frequent charities in her name to her poor parent, which nobody was surprised at, the lady being celebrated for pious works, and Octavia known to be a great favourite with her. It is now discovered that they were all sent by the generous lover, who has presented Don Joseph very handsomely; but he has brought neither letter nor message to the house of Ardinghi, which affords much speculation.

I am afraid you are heartily tired with this tedious tale. I will not lengthen it with reflections, as I fancy yours will be the same as mine.

With mine all these adventures proceed from artifice on one side and weakness on the other. An honest, tender mind, is often betrayed to ruin by the charms that make the fortune of a designing head, which, when joined with a beautiful face, can never fail of advancement, except barred by a wise mother, who locks up her daughters from view till nobody cares to look on them. My poor friend the duchess of Bolton was educated in solitude, with some choice of books, by a saint-like governess: crammed with virtue and good qualities, she thought it impossible not to find gratitude, though she failed to give passion; and upon this plan threw away her estate, was despised by her husband, and laughed at by the public. Polly, bred in an alehouse, and produced on the stage, has obtained wealth and title, and found the way to be esteemed. So useful is early experience—without it half of life is dissipated in correcting the errors that we have been taught to receive as indisputable truths.

I am ever your, &c.

LETTER CCLVIII.

The same to the same.

Louvere, Jan. 28, N. S. 1753.

Dear Child,

You have given me a great deal of satisfaction by your account of your eldest daughter. I am particularly pleased to hear she is a good arithmetician; it is the best proof of understanding: the knowledge of numbers is one of the chief distinctions between us and brutes. If there is any thing in blood, you may reasonably expect your children should be endowed with an uncommon share of good sense. Mr. Wortley's family and mine have both produced some of the greatest men that have been born in England: I mean admiral Sandwich, and my grandfather, who was distinguished by the name of Wise William. I have heard

lord Bute's father mentioned as an extraordinary genius, though he had not many opportunities of shewing it; and his uncle, the present duke of Argyll, has one of the best heads I ever knew. I will therefore speak to you as supposing lady ——— not only capable, but desirous of learning: in that case by all means let her be indulged in it. You will tell me I did not make it a part of your education: your prospect was very different from hers. As you had much in your circumstances to attract the highest offers, it seemed your business to learn how to live in the world, as it is hers to know how to be easy out of it. It is the common error of builders and parents to follow some plan they think beautiful (and perhaps is so), without considering that nothing is beautiful which is displaced. Hence we see so many edifices raised that the raisers can never inhabit, being too large for their fortunes. Vistos are laid open over barren heaths, and apartments contrived for a coolness very agreeable in Italy, but killing in the north of Britain: thus every woman endeavours to breed her daughter a fine lady, qualifying her for a station in which she will never appear, and at the same time incapacitating her for that retirement to which she is destined. Learning, if she has a real taste for it, will not only make her contented, but happy in it. No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions, or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author, in her closet. To render this amusement complete, she should be permitted to learn the languages. I have heard it lamented that boys lose so many years in mere learning of words: this is no objection to a girl, whose time is not so precious: she cannot advance herself in any profession, and has therefore more hours to spare; and as you say her memory is good, she will be very agreeably employed this way. There are two cautions to be given on this subject: first, not to think herself learned, when she can read Latin, or even Greek. Languages are more properly to be called vehicles of learning, than learning itself, as may be observed in many schoolmasters, who, though perhaps critics in grammar, are the most ignorant fellows upon earth. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words. I would no farther wish her a linguist than to enable her to read books in their originals, that are often corrupted, and are always injured by translations. Two hours application every morning will bring this about much sooner than you can imagine, and she will have leisure enough beside, to run over the English poetry, which is a more important part of a woman's education than it is generally supposed. Many a young damsel has been ruined by a fine copy of verses, which she would have laughed at if she had known it had been stolen from Mr. Waller. I remember, when I was a girl, I saved one of my companions from destruction, who communicated to me an epistle, she was quite charmed with. As she had naturally a good taste, she observed the lines were not so smooth as Prior's or Pope's, but had more thought and spirit than any of theirs. She was wonderfully delighted with such a demonstration of her lover's sense and passion, and not a little pleased with her own charms, that had force enough to inspire such elegancies. In the midst of this triumph, I shewed her that they were taken from Randolph's poems, and the unfortunate transcriber was dismissed with the scorn he deserved. To say truth, the poor plagiary was very unlucky to fall into my hands; that author being no longer in fashion, would have escaped any one of less universal reading than myself. You should encourage your daughter to talk over with you what she reads; and as you are very capable of distinguishing, take care she does not mistake pert folly for wit and humour, or rhyme for poetry, which are the common errors of young people, and have a train of ill consequences. The second caution to be given her (and which is most absolutely necessary) is to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness: the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of her acquaintance. The use of knowledge in our sex, beside the amusement of solitude, is to moderate the passions, and learn to be contented with a small expense, which are the certain effects of a studious life; and it may be preferable even to that fame which men have engrossed to themselves, and will not suffer us to share. You will tell me I have not observed this rule

rule myself: but you are mistaken: it is only inevitable accident that has given me any reputation that way. I have always carefully avoided it, and ever thought it a misfortune. The explanation of this paragraph would occasion a long digression, which I will not trouble you with, it being my present design only to say what I think useful for the instruction of my granddaughter, which I have much at heart. If she has the same inclination (I should say passion) for learning that I was born with, history, geography, and philosophy will furnish her with materials to pass away cheerfully a longer life than is allotted to mortals. I believe there are few heads capable of making Sir Isaac Newton's calculations, but the result of them is not difficult to be understood by a moderate capacity. Do not fear this should make her affect the character of lady ——, or lady ——, or Mrs. ——: those women are ridiculous, not because they have learning, but because they have it not. One thinks herself a complete historian, after reading Echard's Roman History; another a profound philosopher, having got by heart some of Pope's *unintelligible* essays; and a third an able divine on the strength of Whitfield's sermons: thus you hear them screaming politics and controversy.

It is a saying of Thucydides, that ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved. Indeed it is impossible to be far advanced in it, without being more humbled by a conviction of human ignorance, than elated by learning. At the same time I recommend books, I neither exclude work nor drawing. I think it is as scandalous for a woman not to know how to use a needle, as for a man not to know how to use a sword. I was once extremely fond of my pencil, and it was a great mortification to me when my father turned off my master, having made a considerable progress for the short time I learnt. My over eagerness in the pursuit of it had brought a weakness in my eyes, that made it necessary to leave off; and all the advantage I got was the improvement of my hand. I see, by hers, that practice will make her a ready writer: she may attain it by serving you for a secretary, when your health or affairs make it troublesome to you to write yourself; and custom will make it an agreeable amusement to her. She cannot have too many for that station of life which will probably be her fate. The ultimate end of your education was to make you a good wife (and I have the comfort to hear that you are one): hers ought to be, to make her happy in a virgin state. I will not say it is happier; but it is undoubtedly safer than any marriage. In a lottery, where there is (at the lowest computation) ten thousand blanks to a prize, it is the most prudent choice, not to venture. I have always been so thoroughly persuaded of this truth, that, notwithstanding the flattering views I had for you (as I never intended you a sacrifice to my vanity), I thought I owed you the justice to lay before you all the hazards attending matrimony: you may recollect I did so in the strongest manner. Perhaps you may have more success in the instructing your daughter: she has so much company at home, she will not need seeking it abroad, and will more readily take the notions you think fit to give her. As you were alone in my family, it would have been thought a great cruelty to suffer you no companions of your own age, especially having so many near relations, and I do not wonder their opinions influenced yours. I was not sorry to see you not determined on a single life, knowing it was not your father's intention, and contented myself with endeavouring to make your home so easy that you might not be in haste to leave it.

I am afraid you will think this a very long insignificant letter. I hope the kindness of the design will excuse it, being willing to give you every proof in my power that I am your, &c.

LETTER CCLIX.

The same to the same.

Louvere, Feb. 19, N. S. 175

My dear Child,

I GAVE you some general thoughts on the education of your children in my last letter; but fearing you should think I neglected your request, by answering it with too much conciseness, I am resolved to add to it what little I know on that subject, and which may perhaps be useful to you in a concern, with which you seem so nearly affected.

People commonly educate their children as they build their houses, according to some plan they think beautiful, without

considering whether it is suited to the purposes for which they are designed. Almost all girls of quality are educated as if they were to be great ladies, which is often as little to be expected, as an immoderate heat of the sun in the north of Scotland. You should teach yours to confine their desires to probabilities, to be as useful as is possible to themselves, and to think privacy (as it is) the happiest state of life. I do not doubt your giving them all the instructions necessary to form them to a virtuous life; but 'tis a fatal mistake to do this without proper restrictions. Vices are often hid under the name of virtues, and the practice of them followed by the worst of consequences. Sincerity, friendship, piety, disinterestedness, and generosity, are all great virtues; but pursued, without discretion, become criminal. I have seen ladies indulge their own ill humour by being very rude and impertinent, and think they deserved approbation, by saying I love to speak truth. One of your acquaintances made a ball the next day after her mother died, to shew she was sincere. I believe your own reflection will furnish you with but too many examples of the ill effects of the rest of the sentiments I have mentioned, when too warmly embraced. They are generally recommended to young people without limits or distinction, and this prejudice hurries them into great misfortunes, while they are applauding themselves in the very noble practice (as they fancy) of very eminent virtues.

I cannot help adding (out of my real affection to you), that I wish you would moderate that fondness you have for your children. I do not mean you should abate any part of your care, or not do your duty to them in its utmost extent; but I would have you early prepare yourself for disappointments, which are heavy in proportion to their being surprising. It is hardly possible, in such a number, that none should be unhappy; prepare yourself against a misfortune of that kind. I confess there is hardly any more difficult to support; yet, it is certain, imagination has a great share in the pain of it, and it is more in our power (than it is commonly believed) to soften whatever ills are founded or augmented by fancy. Strictly speaking, there is but one real evil, I mean acute pain; all other complaints are so considerably diminished by time, that it is plain the grief is owing to our passion, since the sensation of it vanishes when that is over.

There is another mistake I forgot to mention, usual in mothers: if any of their daughters are beauties, they take great pains to persuade them that they are ugly, or at least that they think so, which the young woman never fails to believe springs from envy, and is perhaps not much in the wrong. I would, if possible, give them a just notion of their figure, and shew them how far it is valuable. Every advantage has its price, and may be either over or undervalued. It is the common doctrine of (what are called) good books, to inspire a contempt of beauty, riches, greatness, &c. which has done as much mischief among the young of our sex as an over eager desire of them. Why they should not look on those things as blessings where they are bestowed, though not necessaries that it is impossible to be happy without, I cannot conceive. I am persuaded the ruin of lady —— was in great measure owing to the notions given her by the good people that had the care of her. 'Tis true, her circumstances and your daughters' are very different: they should be taught to be content with privacy, and yet not neglect good fortune, if it should be offered them.

I am afraid I have tired you with my instructions. I do not give them as believing my age has furnished me with superior wisdom, but in compliance with your desire, and being fond of every opportunity that gives a proof of the tenderness with which I am ever your, &c.

P.S. I should be glad if you sent me the third volume of Campbell's Architecture, and with it any other entertaining books. I have seen the Duchess of Marlborough's Memoirs, but should be glad of the Apology for a late Resignation. As to the ale, 'tis now so late in the year, it is impossible it should come good. You do not mention your father; my last letter from him told me he intended soon for England.

LETTER CCLX.

The same to the same.

Louvere, March 6, 1753.

I CANNOT help writing a sort of apology for my last letter, foreseeing that you will think it wrong, or at least lord Bute will

will be extremely shocked, at the proposal of a learned education for daughters, which the generality of men believe to be as great a profanation, as the clergy would do, if the laity should presume to exercise the functions of the priesthood. I desire you would take notice, I would not have learning enjoined them as a task, but permitted as a pleasure, if their genius leads them naturally to it. I look upon my grand-daughters as a sort of lay nuns: destiny may have laid up other things for them, but they have no reason to expect to pass their time otherwise than their aunts do at present; and I know, by experience, it is in the power of study not only to make solitude tolerable, but agreeable. I have now lived almost seven years in a stricter retirement than yours in the isle of Bute, and can assure you I have never had half an hour heavy on my hands, for want of something to do. Whoever will cultivate their own mind, will find full employment. Every virtue does not only require great care in the planting, but as much daily solicitude in the cherishing, as exotic fruits and flowers. The vices and passions (which I am afraid are the natural product of the soil) demand perpetual weeding. Add to this the search after knowledge (every branch of which is entertaining), and the longest life is too short for the pursuit of it; which, though in some regard confined to very strait limits, leaves still a vast variety of amusements to those capable of tasting them, which is utterly impossible to be attained by those that are blinded by prejudice, the certain effect of an ignorant education. My own was one of the worst in the world, being exactly the same as Clarissa Harlow's: her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother, I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her; she took so much pains, from my infancy, to fill my head with superstitious tales and false notions. It was none of her fault, that I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned methodist. Almost all girls are bred after this manner. I believe you are the only woman (perhaps I might say, person) that never was either frighted or cheated into any thing by your parents. I can truly affirm, I never deceived any body in my life, excepting (which I confess has often happened undesigned) by speaking plainly; as Earl Stanhope used to say (during his ministry) he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which, as they thought *impossible* to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write information to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them. Most people confound the ideas of sense and cunning, though there are really no two things in nature more opposite: it is, in part, from this false reasoning, the unjust custom prevails of debarring our sex from the advantages of learning, the men fancying the improvement of our understandings would only furnish us with more art to deceive them, which is directly contrary to the truth. Fools are always enterprizing, not seeing the difficulties of deceit, or the ill consequences of detection. I could give many examples of ladies whose ill conduct has been very notorious, which has been owing to that ignorance, which has exposed them to idleness, which is justly called the mother of mischief. There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince: they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which, if they attain, they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no distinction of capacity; though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them, that a mare could *not* be taught to pace. I could add a great deal on this subject, but I am not now endeavouring to remove the prejudices of mankind; my only design is, to point out to my grand-daughters the method of being contented with that retreat, to which unforeseen circumstances may oblige them, and which is perhaps preferable to all the show of public life. It has alway been my inclination. Lady Stafford (who knew me better than any body else in the world, both from her own just discernment, and my heart being ever as open to her as myself) used to tell me, my true vocation was a monastery; and I now find, by experience, more sincere pleasures with my books and garden, than all the flutter of a court could give me.

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If you follow my advice, in relation to lady ——, my correspondence may be of use to her; and I shall very willingly give her those instructions that may be necessary in the pursuit of her studies. Before her age I was in the most regular commerce with my grandmother, though the difference of our time of life was much greater, she being past forty-five when she married my grandfather. She died at ninety-six, retaining, to the last, the vivacity and clearness of her understanding, which was very uncommon. You cannot remember her, being then in your nurse's arms. I conclude with repeating to you, I only recommend, but am far from commanding, which I think I have no right to do. I tell you my sentiments, because you desired to know them, and hope you will receive them with some partiality, as coming from your, &c.

LETTER CCLXI.

The same to the same.

Louvere, June 3, N. S 1753.

My dear Child,

You see I was not mistaken in supposing we should have disputes concerning your daughters, if we were together, since we can differ even at this distance. The sort of learning that I recommended is not so expensive, either of time or money, as dancing, and in my opinion likely to be of much more use to lady ——, if her memory and apprehension are what you represented them to me. However, every one has a right to educate their children after their own way, and I shall speak no more on that subject. I was so much pleased with the character you gave her, that had there been any possibility of her undertaking so long a journey, I should certainly have asked for her; and I think out of such a number you might have spared her. I own my affection prevailed over my judgment in this thought, since nothing can be more imprudent than undertaking the management of another's child. I verily believe that had I carried six daughters out of England with me, I could have disposed of them all advantageously. The winter I passed at Rome there was an unusual concourse of English, many of them with great estates, and their own masters: as they had no admittance to the Roman ladies, nor understood the language, they had no way of passing their evenings but in my apartment, where I had always a full drawing-room. Their governors encouraged their assiduities as much as they could, finding I gave them lessons of economy and good conduct; and my authority was so great, it was a common threat amongst them, I'll tell Lady Mary what you say. I was judge of all their disputes, and my decisions always submitted to. While I staid, there was neither gaming, drinking, quarrelling, or keeping. The Abbé Grant (a very honest good-natured North Briton, who has resided several years at Rome) was so much amazed at this uncommon regularity, he would have made me believe I was bound in conscience to pass my life there, for the good of my countrymen. I can assure you my vanity was not at all raised by this influence over them, knowing very well that had lady Charlotte de Roussi been in my place, it would have been the same thing. There is that general emulation in mankind, I am fully persuaded if a dozen young fellows bred a bear amongst them, and saw no other creature, they would every day fall out for the bear's favours, and be extremely flattered by any mark of distinction shewn by that ugly animal. Since my last return to Italy, which is now near seven years, I have lived in a solitude not unlike that of Robinson Crusoe: excepting my short trips to Louvere, my whole time is spent in my closet and garden, without regretting any conversation but that of my own family. The study of simples is a new amusement to me. I have no correspondence with any body at London but yourself and your father, whom I have not heard from a long time. My best wishes attend you and yours, being with great truth your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXII.

The same to the same.

Louvere, June 10, N. S 1753.

Dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours of May the 12th but yesterday, July the 9th. I am surprised you complain of my silence. I have never failed answering yours the post after I received them; but I fear, being directed to Twickenham (having no other direction from you), your servants there may have neglected them. I have been these six weeks, and still am, at my dairy-house, which joins to my garden. I believe I have

have already told you it is a long mile from the castle, which is situate in the midst of a very large village, once a considerable town, part of the walls still remaining, and has not vacant ground enough about it to make a garden, which is my greatest amusement, it being now troublesome to walk, or even go in the chaise till the evening. I have fitted up in this farm-house a room for myself; that is to say, strewed the floor with rushes, covered the chimney with moss and branches, and adorned the room with basons of earthen ware (which is made here to great perfection) filled with flowers, and put in some straw chairs, and a couch bed, which is my whole furniture. This spot of ground is so beautiful, I am afraid you will scarce credit the description, which, however, I can assure you, shall be very literal, without any embellishment from imagination. It is on a bank, forming a kind of peninsula, raised from the river Oglio fifty feet, to which you may descend by easy stairs cut in the turf, and either take the air on the river, which is as large as the Thames at Richmond, or by walking an avenue two hundred yards on the side of it, you find a wood of a hundred acres, which was all ready cut into walks and ridings when I took it. I have only added fifteen bowers in different views, with seats of turf. They were easily made, here being a large quantity of underwood, and a great number of wild vines, which twist to the top of the highest trees, and from which they make a very good sort of wine they call brusco. I am now writing to you in one of these arbours, which is so thick shaded, the sun is not troublesome, even at noon. Another is on the side of the river, where I have made a made a camp kitchen, that I take the fish, dress, and eat it immediately, and at the same time see the barks, which ascend or descend every day to or from Mantua, Guastalla, or Pont de Vie, all considerable towns. This little wood is carpetted, in their succeeding seasons, with violets and strawberries, inhabited by a nation of nightingales, and filled with game of all kinds, excepting deer and wild boar, the first being unknown here, and not being large enough for the other.

My garden was a plain vineyard when it came into my hands not two years ago, and it is, with a small expence, turned into a garden that (apart from the advantage of the climate) I like better than that of Kensington. The Italian vineyards are not planted like those in France, but in clumps, fastened to trees planted in equal ranks (commonly fruit trees), and continued in festoons from one to another, which I have turned into covered galleries of shade, that I can walk in the heat without being incommoded by it. I have made a dining room of verdure capable of holding a table of twenty covers; the whole ground is three hundred and seventeen feet in length, and two hundred in breadth. You see it is far from large; but so prettily disposed (though I say it), that I never saw a more agreeable rustic garden, abounding with all sorts of fruit, and producing a variety of wines. I would send you a pipe, if I did not fear the customs would make you pay too dear for it. I believe my description gives you but an imperfect idea of my garden. Perhaps I shall succeed better in describing my manner of life, which is as regular as that of any monastery. I generally rise at six, and as soon as I have breakfasted, put myself at the head of my needle-women, and work with them till nine. I then inspect my dairy, and take a turn among my poultry, which is a very large enquiry. I have, at present, two hundred chickens, besides turkies, geese, ducks, and peacocks. All things have hitherto prospered under my care; my bees and silk-worms are doubled, and I am told that, without accidents, my capital will be so in two years time. At eleven o'clock I retire to my books, I dare not indulge myself in that pleasure above an hour. At twelve I constantly dine, and sleep after dinner till about three. I then send for some of my old priests, and either play at piquet or whist, till 'tis cool enough to go out. One evening I walk in my wood, where I often sup, take the air on horseback the next, and go on the water the third. The fishery of this part of the river belongs to me; and my fisherman's little boat (to which I have a green lute-string awning) serves me for a barge. He and his son are my rowers, without any expence, he being very well paid by the profit of the fish, which I give him on condition of having every day one dish for my table. Here is plenty of every sort of fresh water fish (excepting salmon); but we have a large trout so like it, that I who have almost forgot the taste, do not distinguish it.

We are both placed properly in regard to our different times of life: you amidst the

the fair, the gallant, and the gay: I, in a retreat, where I enjoy every amusement that solitude can afford. I confess I sometimes wish for a little conversation; but I reflect that the commerce of the world gives more uneasiness than pleasure, and quiet is all the hope that can reasonably be indulged at my age. My letter is of an unconscionable length; I should ask your pardon for it, but I had a mind to give you an idea of my mode of passing my time, take it as an instance of the affection of, dear child, your, &c.

LETTER CCLXIII.

The same to the same.

Louvere, June 23, N. S. 1753.

My dear Child,

I HAVE just received two letters from you, though the dates are a month distant. The death of lady —— naturally raises the mortifying reflection, on how slender a thread hangs all worldly prosperity! I cannot say I am otherwise much touched at it. It is true she was my sister, as it were, and in some sense; but her behaviour to me never gave me any love, nor her general conduct any esteem. I own I cannot forgive her dishonouring her family by her marriage; it may be you will call this an old fashioned way of thinking. The confounding of all ranks, and making a jest of order, has long been growing in England; and I perceive by the books you sent me, has made a very considerable progress. The heroes and heroines of the age are coblers and kitchen wenches. Perhaps you will say, I should not take my ideas of the manners of the times from such trifling authors; but it is more truly to be found among them, than from any historian: as they write merely to get money, they always fall into the notions that are most acceptable to the present taste. It has long been the endeavour of our English writers, to represent people of quality as the vilest and silliest part of the nation; being (generally) very low born themselves, I am not surprized at their propagating this doctrine; but I am much mistaken if this levelling principle does not, one day or other, break out in fatal consequences to the public, as it has already done in many private families. You will think I am influenced by living under an aristocratic government, where distinction of rank is carried to a very great height; but I can assure you, my opinion is founded on reflection and experience, and I wish to God I had always thought in the same manner: though I had ever the utmost contempt for mis-alliances, yet the silly prejudices of my education had taught me to believe that I was to treat nobody as an inferior, and that poverty was a degree of merit: this imaginary humility has made me admit many familiar acquaintance, of which I have heartily repented every one; and the greatest examples I have known of honour and integrity have been among those of the highest birth and fortunes. There are many reasons why it should be so, which I will not trouble you with. If my letter was to be published, I know I should be railed at for pride, and called an enemy to the poor; but I take a pleasure in telling you my real thoughts. I would willingly establish the most intimate friendship between us, and I am sure no proof of it shall ever be wanting on my side. I am sorry for the untimely death of poor lord C***ry; he had certainly a very good heart: I have often thought it great pity it was not under the direction of a better head. I had lost his favour some time before I left England on a pleasant account. He came to me one morning with a hat full of paper, which he desired me to peruse, and tell him my sincere opinion: I trembled at the proposition, foreseeing the inevitable consequence of this confidence. However, I was not so barbarous as to tell him that his verses were extremely stupid (as God knows they were), and that he was no more inspired with the spirit of poetry, than that of prophecy. I contented myself with representing to him, in the mildest terms, that it was not the business of a man of quality to turn author, and that he should confine himself to the applause of his friends, and by no means venture on the press. He seemed to take this advice with good humour, promised to follow it, and we parted without any dispute; but alas! he could not help showing his performance to better judges, who, with their usual candour and good nature, earnestly exhorted him to oblige the world with this instructive piece, which was soon after published, and had the success I expected from it. Pope persuaded him, poor soul! that my declaiming

claiming against it occasioned the ill reception it met with, though this is the first time I ever mentioned it in my life, and I did not so much as guess the reason. I heard of him no more, till a few days before I left London. I accidentally said to one of his acquaintance, that his visits to me were at an end, I knew not why; and I was let into this weighty secret. My journey prevented all explanation between us, and perhaps I should not have thought it worth any, if I had staid. I am not surprised he has left nothing to the duchess of Q****y, knowing he had no value for her, though I never heard him name her: but he was of that species of mankind, who, without designing it, discover all they think to any observer that converses with them. His desire of fixing his name to a certain quantity of wall, is one instance, among thousands, of the passion men have for perpetuating their memory: this weakness (I call every sentiment so that cannot be defended by reason) is so universal, it may be looked on as instinct; and as no instinct is implanted but to some purpose, I could almost incline to the opinion, which was professed by several of the fathers, and adopted by some of the best French divines, that the punishment of the next life consists not only in the continuance, but the redoubling our attachment for this, in a more intense manner than we can now have any notion of. These reflections would carry me very far: for your comfort my paper is at an end, and I have scarce room to tell you a truth which admits of no doubt, that I am your, &c.

LETTER CCLXIV.

The same to the same.

Brescia, July 22, N. S. 1758.

When I wrote to you last, my dear child, I told you I had a great cold, which ended in a very bad fever, that continued a fortnight without intermission, and you may imagine has brought me very low. I have not yet left my chamber. My first care is to thank you for yours of May 8.

I have not yet lost all my interest in this country by the death of the Doge, having another very considerable friend, though I cannot expect to keep him long, he being near fourscore. I mean the cardinal Querini, who is archbishop of this diocese, and consequently of great power, there not being one family, high or low, in this province, that has not some ecclesiatic in it, and therefore all of them have some dependence on him. He is one of the first families of Venice, vastly rich of himself, and has many great benefices beside his archbishopric; but these advantages are little in his eyes, in comparison of being the first author (as he fancies) at this day in Christendom; and indeed, if the merit of books consisted in bulk and number, he might very justly claim that character. I believe he has published, yearly, several volumes for above fifty years, beside corresponding with all the literati of Europe, and, among these, several of the senior fellows at Oxford, and some members of the royal society, that neither you nor I have ever heard of, whom he is persuaded are the most eminent men in England. He is at present employed in writing his own life, of which he has already printed the first tome; and, if he goes on in the same style, it will be a most voluminous performance. He begins from the moment of his birth, and tells us that, on that day, he made such extraordinary faces, the midwife, chambermaids, and nurses all agreed, that there was born a shining light in church and state. You'll think me very merry with the failings of my friend. I confess I ought to forgive a vanity to which I am obliged for many good offices, since I do not doubt it is owing to that, that he professes himself so highly attached to my service, having an opinion that my suffrage is of great weight in the learned world, and that I shall not fail to spread his fame, at least all over Great Britain. He sent me a present last week of a very uncommon kind, even his own picture, extremely well done, but so flattering, that it is a young old man, with a most pompous inscription under it. I suppose he intended it for the ornament of my library, not knowing it is only a closet: however, these distinctions he shews me, gives me a figure in this town, where every body has something to hope from him; and it was certainly in a view to that they would have complimented me with a statue, for I would not have you mistake so far as to imagine there is any set of people more grateful or generous than another. Mankind is every where

where the same: like cherries or apples, they may differ in size, shape, or colour, from different soils, climates, or culture, but are still essentially the same species; and the little black wood cherry is not nearer akin to the may-dukes that are served at great tables, than the wild naked negro, to the fine figures adorned with coronets and ribbands. This observation might be carried yet farther: all animals are stimulated by the same passions, and act very nearly alike, as far as we are capable of observing them.

The conclusion of your letter has touched me very much. I sympathise with you, my dear child, in all the concern you express for your family: you may remember I represented it to you, before you were married; but that is one of the sentiments it is impossible to comprehend till it is felt. A mother only knows a mother's fondness. Indeed the pain so overbalances the pleasure, that I believe if it could be thoroughly understood, there would be no mothers at all. However, take care that the anxiety for the future does not take from you the comforts you may enjoy in the present hour: it is all that is properly ours; and yet such is the weakness of humanity, we commonly lose what is, either by regretting the past, or disturbing our minds with fear of what may be. You have many blessings: a husband you love, and who behaves well to you, agreeable hopeful children, a handsome convenient house, with pleasant gardens, in a good air and fine situation, which I place among the most solid satisfactions of life. The truest wisdom is that which diminishes to us what is displeasing, and turns our thoughts to the advantages which we possess. I can assure you I give no precepts I do not daily practise. How often do I fancy to myself the pleasure I should take in seeing you in the midst of the little people; and how severe do I then think my destiny, that denies me that happiness! I endeavour to comfort myself by reflecting, that we should certainly have perpetual disputes (if not quarrels) concerning the management of them; the affection of a grandmother has generally a tincture of dotage; you would say I spoilt them, and perhaps not be much in the wrong. Speaking of them calls to my remembrance the token I have so long promised my god-daughter: I am really ashamed of it: I would have sent it by Mr. Anderson, if he had been going immediately to London; but as he proposed a long tour, I durst not press it upon him. It is not easy to find any one who will take the charge of a jewel for a long journey; it may be the value of it in money to chuse something for herself, would be as acceptable: if so, I will send you a note upon Child. Ceremony should be banished between us. I beg you would speak freely upon that, and all other occasions, to your, &c.

LETTER CCLXV.

The same to the same.

Louvere, June 23, 1754.

My dear Child,

I HAVE promised you some remarks on all the books I have received. I believe you would easily forgive my not keeping my word; however, I shall go on. The Rambler is certainly a strong misnomer; he always plods in the beaten road of his predecessors, following the Spectator (with the same pace a pack horse would do a hunter) in the style that is proper to lengthen a paper. These writers may, perhaps, be of service to the public, which is saying a great deal in their favour. There are numbers of both sexes who never read any thing but such productions, and cannot spare time, from doing nothing, to go through a sixpenny pamphlet. Such gentle readers may be improved by a moral hint, which, though repeated over and over, from generation to generation, they never heard in their lives. I should be glad to know the name of this laborious author. H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and, I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All this sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much

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out of nature as fairy treasures. Fielding has really a fund of true humour, and was to be pitied at his first entrance into the world, having no choice, as he himself said, but to be a hackney writer, or a hackney coachman. His genius deserved a better fate; but I cannot help blaming that continued indiscretion, to give it the softest name, that has run through his life, and I am afraid still remains. I guessed R. Random to be his, though without his name. I cannot think Ferdinand Fathom wrote by the same hand, it is every way so much below it. Sally Fielding has mended her style in her last volume of David Simple, which conveys a useful moral, though she does not seem to have intended it: I mean, shews the ill consequences of not providing against casual losses, which happen to almost every body. Mrs. Orgueil's character is well drawn, and is frequently to be met with. The Art of Tormenting, the Female Quixote, and Sir C. Goodville, are all sale work. I suppose they proceed from her pen, and I heartily pity her, constrained by her circumstances to seek her bread by a method, I do not doubt, she despises. Tell me who is that accomplished countess she celebrates. I left no such person in London; nor can I imagine who is meant by the English Sappho mentioned in Betsy Thoughtless, whose adventures, and those of Jemmy Jessamy, gave me some amusement. I was better entertained by the valet, who very fairly represents, how you are bought and sold by your servants. I am now so accustomed to another manner of treatment, it would be difficult to me to suffer them: his adventures have the uncommon merit of ending in a surprising manner. The general want of invention, which reigns among our writers, inclines me to think it is not the natural growth of our island, which has not sun enough to warm the imagination. The press is loaded by the servile stock of imitators. Lord Bolingbroke would have quoted Horace in this place. Since I was born, no original has appeared excepting Congreve and Fielding, who would, I believe, have approached nearer to his excellencies, if not forced, by necessity, to publish without correction, and throw many productions into the world, he would have thrown into the fire, if meat could have been got without money, or money without scribbling. The greatest virtue, justice; and the most distinguishing prerogative of mankind, writing; when duly executed, do honour to human nature; but when degenerated into trades, are the most contemptible ways of getting bread. I am sorry not to see any more of Peregrine Pickle's performances; I wish you would tell me his name.

I can't forbear saying something in relation to my grand-daughters, who are very near my heart. If any of them are fond of reading, I would not advise you to hinder them (chiefly because it is impossible) seeing poetry, plays, or romances; but accustom them to talk over what they read, and point out to them, as you are very capable of doing, the absurdity often concealed under fine expressions, where the sound is apt to engage the admiration of young people. I was so much charmed, at fourteen, with the dialogue of Henry and Emma, I can say it by heart to this day, without reflecting on the monstrous folly of the story in plain prose, where a young heiress to a fond father, is represented falling in love with a fellow she had only seen as a huntsman, a falconer, and a beggar, and who confesses, without any circumstances of excuse, that he is obliged to run his country, having newly committed a murder. She ought reasonably to have supposed him, at best, a highwayman; yet the virtuous virgin resolves to run away with him, to live among the banditti, and wait upon his trollop, if she had no other way of enjoying his company. This senseless tale is, however, so well varnished with melody of words, and pomp of sentiments, I am convinced it has hurt more girls than ever were injured by the worst poems extant.

I fear this counsel has been repeated to you before; but I have lost so many letters designed for you, I know not which you have received. If you would have me avoid this fault, you must take notice of those that arrive, which you very seldom do. My dear child, God bless you and yours. I am ever your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXVI.

The same to the same.

Louvere, 1754.

My dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours of September 15, this morning, October 9, and am exceedingly glad of the health of you and your family. I am fond of your little Louisa: to say truth, I was afraid of a Bess, a Peg, or a Suky, which all give me the ideas of washing-tubs, and scowering of kettles.

I am much obliged to Mr. Hamilton, which is according to the academy of compliments, more his goodness than my deserts: I saw him but twice, and both times in mixed company; but am surprised you have never mentioned lord Roseberry, by whom I sent a packet to you, and took some pains to shew him civilities: he breakfasted with me at Padua: I gave him bread and butter of my own manufacture, which is the admiration of all the English. He promised to give you full information of myself, and all my employments. He seemed delighted with my house and gardens, and perhaps has forgot he ever saw me, or any thing that belonged to me. We have had many English here. Mr. G***le, his lady, and her suite of adorers, deserve particular mention: he was so good as to present me with his curious book: since the days of the honourable Mr. Edward Howard, nothing has ever been published like it. I told him the age wanted an earl of Dorset to celebrate it properly; and he was so well pleased with that speech, that he visited me every day, to the great comfort of madame, who was entertained, meanwhile, with parties of pleasure of another kind; though I fear I lost his esteem at last by refusing to correspond with him. However, I qualified my denial by complaining of my bad eyes not permitting me to multiply my correspondents. I could give you the characters of many other travellers, if I thought it would be of any use to you. It is melancholy to see the pains our pious minister takes to debauch the younger sort of them: but, as you say, all is melancholy that relates to Great Britain. I have a high value for Mr. Pitt's probity and understanding, without having the honour of being acquainted with him. I am persuaded he is able to do whatever is within the bounds of possibility; but there is an augæan stable to be cleansed, and several other labours, that I doubt if Hercules himself would be equal to.

If the duke of Kingston only intends to build a hunting seat at Thoresby, I think it is most proper for the situation, which was certainly by nature never designed for a palace. I hope he will not employ the same architect that built his house in London. You see I am not entirely divested of family prejudices, though I thank the Lord they are not lively enough to give me violent uneasiness. I cannot help wishing well to my ever dear brother's children: however, I have the conscious satisfaction of knowing I have done my duty towards them, as far as my power extended. Nobody can be served against their will. May all your young ones grow up an honour to you! My paper is out: I have scarce room to assure you, my dear child, that I am ever your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXVII.

Lady M. W. Montagu to Mr. Wortley.

Louvere, Dec. 19, N. S. 1754.

I RECEIVED yours of October 6, yesterday, which gave me great pleasure. I am flattered by finding that our sentiments are the same in regard to lord Bolingbroke's writings, as you will see more clearly, if you ever have the long letter I have wrote to you on that subject. I believe he never read Horace, or any other author, with a design of instructing himself, thinking he was born to give precepts, and not to follow them: at least if he was not mad enough to have this opinion, he endeavoured to impose it on the rest of the world. All his works, being well considered, are little more than a panegyric on his own universal genius; many of his pretensions are as preposterously inconsistent, as if sir Isaac Newton had aimed at being a critic in fashions, and wrote for the information of tailors and mantua-makers. I am of opinion, that he never looked into half the authors he quotes, and am much mistaken if he is not obliged to M. Bayle for the generality of his criticisms; for which reason

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he affects to despise him, that he may steal from him with the less suspicion. A diffusive style (though admired as florid by all half-witted readers) is commonly obscure, and always trifling. Horace has told us, that where words abound, sense is thinly spread; as trees overcharged with leaves, bear little fruit.

You do not mention lord Orrery, or perhaps would not throw away time in perusing that extraordinary work, addressed to a son, whom he educates with an intention that he should be a first minister, and promises to pray to God for him if ever he plays the knave in that station. I perceive that he has already been honoured with five editions. I wish that encouragement may prevail with him to give the world more memoirs. I am resolved to read them all, though they should multiply to as many tomes as Erasmus.

Here are no newspapers to be had but those printed under this government; consequently I never learn the births or deaths of private persons. I was ignorant of that of my poor friend the duke of Bolton, when my daughter's last letter told me the death of the duke, and the jointure he has left his second duchess.

I am very glad your health is so good. May that and every other blessing be ever yours.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Bute.

Louvere, Jan. 23, N. S. 1755.

I AM very sorry for your past indisposition, and, to say truth, not heartily glad of your present condition; but I neither do nor will admit of your excuses for your silence. I have already told you, some ten or twelves times over, that you should make your eldest daughter your secretary; it would be an ease to yourself, and highly improving to her, in every regard: you may, if you please, at once oblige your mother, and instruct your daughter, by only talking half an hour over your tea in a morning.

The duchess of Queensberry's misfortune would move compassion in the hardest heart; yet, all circumstances coolly considered, I think the young lady deserves most to be pitied, being left in the terrible situation of a young (and I suppose) rich widowhood, which is walking blindfold, upon stilts, amidst precipices, though perhaps as little sensible of her danger as a child of a quarter old would be in the paws of a monkey leaping on the tiles of a house. I believe, like all others of your age, you have long been convinced there is no real happiness to be found or expected in this world. You have seen a court near enough to know neither riches nor power can secure it; and all human endeavours after felicity are as childish, as running after sparrows to lay salt on their tails: but I ought to give you another information, which can only be learned by experience, that liberty is an idea equally chimerical, and has no real existence in this life. I can truly assure you, I have never been so little mistress of my own time and actions, as since I have lived alone. Mankind is placed in a state of dependency, not only on one another (which all are in some degree), but so many inevitable accidents thwart our designs, and limit our best laid projects. The poor efforts of our utmost prudence, and political schemes, appear, I fancy, in the eyes of some superior beings, like the pecking of a young linnet to break a wire cage, or the climbing of a squirrel in a hoop; the moral needs no explanation: let us sing as cheerfully as we can in our impenetrable confinement, and crack our nuts with pleasure from the little store that is allowed us.

My old friend, cardinal Querini, is dead of an apoplectic fit, which I am sorry for, notwithstanding the disgust that happened between us, on the ridiculous account, of which I gave you the history, a year ago. His memory will, probably, last as long as this province, having embellished it with so many noble structures, particularly a public library well furnished, richly adorned, and a college built for poor scholars, with salaries for masters, and plentifully endowed. Many charitable foundations, and so large a part of the new cathedral (which will be one of the finest churches in Lombardy), has been built at his expence: he may be almost called the founder of it. He has left a considerable annuity to continue it, and deserves an eminent place among the six prelates that have devoted what they received from the church to the use of the public, which is not here

(as in some countries) so ungrateful to overlook benefits. Many statues have been erected, and medals cast to his honour, one of which has the figures of Piety, Learning, and Munificence, on the reverse, in the attitude of the three graces. His funeral has been celebrated by the city with all the splendor it was capable of bestowing, and waited on by all ranks of the inhabitants.

You told me, some months since, that a box was made up for me. I have never had the bill of lading, and know not whether you have received the little bill of exchange sent by your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXIX.

The same to the same.

Louvere, March 1, 1755.

I PITY lady Mary Coke extremely. You will be surprised at this sentiment, when she is the present envy of her sex, in the possession of youth, health, wealth, wit, beauty, and liberty. All these seeming advantages will prove snares to her. She appears to me, as I observed in a former instance, to be walking blindfold upon stilts, amidst precipices. She is at a dangerous time of life, when the passions are in full vigour, and, we are apt flatter ourselves, the understanding arrived at maturity. People are never so near playing the fool, as when they think themselves wise: they lay aside that distrust which is the surest guard against indiscretion, and venture on many steps they would have trembled at, at fifteen; and, like children, are never so much exposed to falling, as when they first leave off leading-strings. I think nothing but a miracle, or the support of a guardian angel, can protect her. It is true (except I am much mistaken), nature has furnished her with one very good defence. I took particular notice of her, both from my own liking her, and her uncommonly obliging behaviour to me. She was then of an age not capable of much disguise, and I thought she had a great turn to economy: it is an admirable shield against the most fatal weaknesses. Those who have the good fortune to be born with that inclination seldom ruin themselves, and are early aware of the designs laid against them. Yet, with all that precaution, she will have so many plots contrived for her destruction, that she will find it very difficult to escape; and if she is a second time unhappily engaged, it will make her much more miserable than the first; as all misfortunes, brought on by our own imprudence, are the most wounding to a sensible heart. The most certain security would be that diffidence which naturally arises from an impartial self-examination. But this is the hardest of all tasks, requiring great reflection, long retirement, and is strongly repugnant to our own vanity, which very unwillingly reveals, even to ourselves, our common frailty, though it is every way a useful study. Mr. Locke, who has made a more exact dissection of the human mind than any man before him, declares, that he gained all his knowledge from the consideration of himself. It is indeed necessary, to judge of others. You condemn lord Cornbury without knowing what he could say in his justification. I am persuaded he thought he performed an act of rigid justice, in excluding the duchess of Queensberry from an inheritance to which she had no natural, though a legal, right; especially having had a large portion from her real father. I have heard him talk on that subject, without naming names, and call it a robbery within the law. He carried that notion to a great height. I agreed with him, that a woman who produced a false child into a family, incurred the highest degree of guilt (being irreparable); but I could not be of his opinion, that it was the duty of the child, in such a case, to renounce the fortune the law entitled it to. You see he has acted by a maxim he imagined just. Lady E**x, being, inside and out, resembling lord Clarendon; and whoever remembers lord Carleton's eyes, must confess they now shine in the duchess's face. I am not bribed, by lord Cornbury's behaviour to me, to find excuses for him; but I have always endeavoured to look on the conduct of my acquaintance without any regard to their way of acting towards me. I can say, with truth, I have strictly adhered to this principle whenever I have been injured; but I own, to my shame be it spoken, the love of flattery has sometimes prevailed on me, under the mask of gratitude, to think better of people than they deserved, when they have professed more

value

value for me than I was conscious of meriting. I slide, insensibly, into talking of myself, though I always resolve against it. I will rescue you from so dull a subject. by concluding my letter with my compliments to lord Bute, my blessing to my grand-children, and the assurance of my being ever your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXX.

The same to the same.

Louvere, July 20, N. S. 1755.

My dear Child,

I HAVE now read over the books you were so good to send, and intend to say something of them all, though some are not worth speaking of. I shall begin, with respect to his dignity, with lord Bolingbroke, who is a glaring proof how far vanity can blind a man, and how easy it is to varnish over to one's self the most criminal conduct. He declares he always loved his country, though he confesses he endeavoured to betray her to popery and slavery; and loved his friends, though he abandoned them in distress, with all the blackest circumstances of treachery. His account of the peace of Utrecht is almost equally unfair or partial: I shall allow that, perhaps, the views of the Whigs, at that time, were too vast, and the nation, dazzled by military glory, had hopes too sanguine; but surely the same terms that the French consented to, at the treaty of Gertruydenberg, might have been obtained; or if the displacing of the duke of Marlborough raised the spirits of our enemies to a degree of refusing what they had before offered, how can he excuse the guilt of removing him from the head of a victorious army, and exposing us to submit to any articles of peace, being unable to continue the war? I agree with him, that the idea of conquering France is a wild extravagant notion, and would, if possible, be impolitic; but she might have been reduced to such a state, as would have rendered her incapable of being terrible to her neighbour for some ages: nor should we have been obliged, as we have done almost ever since, to bribe the French ministers to let us live in quiet. So much for his political reasonings, which, I confess, are delivered in a florid, easy stile; but I cannot be of lord Orrery's opinion, that he is one of the best English writers. Well turned periods, or smooth lines, are not the perfection either of prose or verse; they may serve to adorn, but can never stand in the place of good sense. Copiousness of words, however ranged, is always false eloquence, though it will ever impose on some sort of understandings. How many readers and admirers has madame de Sevigné, who only gives us, in a lively manner, and fashionable phrases, mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions? Sometime the little tattle of a fine lady, sometimes that of an old nurse, always tittle tattle; yet so well gilt over by airy expressions, and a flowing style, she will always please the same people to whom lord Bolingbroke will shine as a first rate author. She is so far to be excused, as her letters were not intended for the press; while he labours to display to posterity all the wit and learning he is master of, and sometimes spoils a good argument by a profusion of words, running out into several pages a thought that might have been more clearly expressed in a few lines, and, what is worse, often falls into contradiction and repetitions, which are almost unavoidable to all voluminous writers, and can only be forgiven to those retailers, whose necessity compels them to diurnal scribbling, who load their meaning with epithets, and run into digressions, because (in the jockey phrase) it rids ground, that is, covers a certain quantity of paper, to answer the demand of the day. A great part of lord Bolingbroke's letters are designed to shew his reading, which, indeed, appears to have been very extensive; but I cannot perceive that such a minute account of it can be of any use to the pupil he pretends to instruct; nor can I help thinking he is far below either Tillotson or Addison, even in style, though the latter was sometimes more diffuse than his judgment approved, to furnish out the length of a daily Spectator. I own I have small regard for lord Bolingbroke as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a man. He came into the world greatly favoured both by nature and fortune, blest with a noble birth, heir to a large estate, endowed with a strong constitution, and, as I have heard, a beautiful figure, high spirits, a good memory, and a lively apprehension, which was cultivated by a learned education: all these

glorious advantages, being left to the direction of a judgment stifled by unbounded vanity, he dishonoured his birth, lost his estate, ruined his reputation, and destroyed his health, by a wild pursuit of eminence even in vice and trifles.

I am far from making misfortune a matter of reproach. I know there are accidental occurrences not to be foreseen or avoided by human prudence, by which a character may be injured, wealth dissipated, or a constitution impaired: but I think I may reasonably despise the understanding of one who conducts himself in such a manner as naturally produces such lamentable consequences, and continues in the same destructive paths to the end of a long life, ostentatiously boasting of morals and philosophy in print, and with equal ostentation bragging of the scenes of low debauchery in public conversation, though deplorably weak both in mind and body, and his virtue and his vigour in a state of non-existence. His confederacy with Swift and Pope puts me in mind of that of Bessus and his sword-men, in the King and no King, who endeavoured to support themselves by giving certificates of each other's merit. Pope has triumphantly declared that they may do and say whatever silly things they please, they will still be the greatest geniuses nature ever exhibited. I am delighted with the comparison given of their benevolence, which is indeed most aptly figured by a circle in the water, which widens till it comes to nothing at all; but I am provoked at lord Bolingbroke's misrepresentation of my favourite Atticus, who seems to have been the only Roman that, from good sense, had a true notion of the times in which he lived, in which the republic was inevitably perishing, and the two factions, who pretended to support it, equally endeavouring to gratify their ambition in its ruin. A wise man, in that case, would certainly declare for neither, and try to save himself and family from the general wreck, which could not be done but by a superiority of understanding acknowledged on both sides. I see no glory in losing life or fortune by being the dupe of either, and very much applaud that conduct which could preserve an universal esteem amidst the fury of opposite parties. We are obliged to act vigorously, where action can do any good; but in a storm, when it is impossible to work with success, the best hands and ablest pilots may laudably gain the shore if they can. Atticus could be a friend to men, without awaking their resentment, and be satisfied with his own virtue without seeking popular fame: he had the reward of his wisdom in his tranquillity, and will ever stand among the few examples of true philosophy, either ancient or modern.

You must forgive this tedious dissertation. I hope you read in the same spirit I write, and take as proofs of affection whatever is sent you by your truly affectionate, &c.

P. S. I must add a few words on the essay on exile, which I read with attention, as a subject that touched me. I found the most abject dejection under a pretended fortitude. That the author felt it, can be no doubt to one that knows (as I do) the mean submissions and solemn promises he made to obtain a return, flattering himself (I suppose) he must of course appear to be at the head of the administration, as every ensign of sixteen fancies he is in a fair way to be a general, on the first sight of his commission.

You will think I have been too long on the character of Atticus. I own I took pleasure in explaining it. Pope thought himself covertly very severe on Addison, by giving him that name: and I feel indignation whenever he is abused, both from his own merit, and because he was ever your father's friend; besides that it is naturally disgusting to see him lampooned after his death by the same man who paid him the most servile court while he lived, and was besides highly obliged by him.

LETTER CCLXXI.

The same to the same.

Louvere, March 2, N. S. 1756.

Dear Child,

I HAD the happiness of a letter from your father last post, by which I find you are in good health, though I have not heard from you for a long time. This frequent interruption of our correspondence is a great uneasiness to me: I charge it on the neglect or irregularity of the post. I sent you a letter by Mr. Anderson a great while ago, to which I never

I never had any answer; neither have I ever heard from him since, though I am fully persuaded he has wrote concerning some little commissions I gave him. I should be very sorry he thought I neglected to thank him for his civilities. I desire lord Bute would inquire about him. I saw him in company with a very pretty pupil, who seemed to me a promising youth. I wish he would fall in love with my grand-daughter. I dare say you laugh at this early design of providing for her: take it as a mark of my affection for you and yours, which is without any mixture of self-interest, since, with my age and infirmities, there is little probability of my living to see them established. I no more expect to arrive at the age of the duchess of Marlborough than to that of Methusalem; neither do I desire it. I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away; and it is gone; for I think there are very few of those left that flourished in my youth. You will perhaps call these melancholy reflections: they are not so. There is a quiet after the abandoning of pursuits, something like the rest that follows a laborious day. I tell you this for your comfort. It was formerly a terrifying view to me, that I should one day be an old woman. I now find that nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those are only unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives, but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth, which appears to me as little desirable at present as the babies do to you, that were the delight of your infancy. I am at the end of my paper, which shortens the sermon.

LETTER CCLXXII.

The same to the same.

Venice, March 22, 1756.

I HAVE received, but this morning, the first box of china lord Bute has been so obliging to send me; I am quite charmed with it, but wish you had sent in it the note of the contents, it has been so long deposited, that it is not impossible some diminution may have happened. Every thing that comes from England is precious to me, to the very hay that is employed in packing. I should be glad to know any thing that could be an agreeable return from hence. There are many things I could send; but they are either contraband, or the custom would cost more than they are worth. I look out for a picture; the few that are in this part of Italy, are those that remain in families, where they are entailed, and I might as well pretend to send you a palace. I am extremely pleased with the account you gave of your father's health. I have wrote to desire his consent in the disposal of poor lady Oxford's legacy: I do not doubt obtaining it. It has been both my interest and my duty to study his character, and I can say, with truth, I never knew any man so capable of a generous action.

A late adventure here makes a great noise from the rank of the people concerned: the marchioness Licinia Bentivoglio, who was heiress of one branch of the Martinenghi, and brought ten thousand gold sequins to her husband, and the expectation of her father's estate, three thousand pounds sterling per annum, the most magnificent palace at Brescia (finer than any in London), another in the country, and many other advantages of woods, plate, jewels, &c. The cardinal Bentivoglio, his uncle, thought he could not choose better, though his nephew might certainly have chose among all the Italian ladies, being descended from the sovereigns of Bologna, actually a grandee of Spain, a noble Venetian, and in possession of twenty-five thousand pounds sterling per annum, with immense wealth in palaces, furniture, and absolute dominion in some of his lands. The girl was pretty, and the match was with the satisfaction of both families; but she brought with her such a diabolical temper, and such *luciferan* pride, that neither husband, relations, or servants, had ever a moment's peace with her. After about eight years warfare, she eloped one fair morning, and took refuge in Venice, leaving her two daughters, the eldest scarce six years old, to the care of the exasperated marquis. Her father was so angry at her extravagant conduct, that he would not, for some time, receive her into his house; but, after some months, and much solicitation, parental fondness prevailed, and she remained with him ever since, notwithstanding all the efforts of her husband, who tried kindness, submission, and threats, to no purpose. The cardinal came twice to Brescia, her own father joined his intreaties, nay, *his holiness*

wrote a letter with his own hands, and made use of the church authority, but he found it harder to reduce one woman than ten heretics. She was inflexible, and lived ten years in this state of reprobation. Her father died last winter, and left her his whole estate for life, and afterwards to her children. Her eldest was now marriageable, and disposed of to the nephew of cardinal Valentino Gonzagua, first minister at Rome. She would neither appear at the wedding, nor take the least notice of a dutiful letter sent by the bride. The old cardinal (who was passionately fond of his illustrious name) was so much touched with the apparent extinction of it, that it was thought to have hastened his death. She continued in the enjoyment of her ill humour, living in great splendor, though almost solitary, having, by some impertinence or other, disgusted all her acquaintance, till about a month ago, when her woman brought her a bason of broth, which she usually drank in her bed. She took a few spoonfuls of it, and then cried out, it was so bad it was impossible to endure it. Her chambermaids were so used to hear her exclamations, that they ate it up very comfortably; they were both seized with the same pangs, and died the next day. She sent for physicians, who judged her poisoned; but, as she had taken a small quantity, by the help of antidotes she recovered, yet is still in a languishing condition. Her cook was examined, and racked, always protesting entire ignorance, and swearing he had made the soup in the same manner he was accustomed. You may imagine the noise of this affair; she loudly accused her husband, it being the interest of no other person to wish her out of the world: he resides at Ferrara (about which the greatest part of his lands lie), and was soon informed of this accident. He sent doctors to her, whom she would not see, sent vast alms to all the convents to pray for her health, and ordered a number of masses to be said in every church of Brescia and Ferrara. He sent letters to the senate at Venice, and published manifestoes in all the capital cities, in which he professes his affection to her, and abhorrence of any attempt against her, and has a cloud of witnesses that he never gave her the least reason of complaint, and even since her leaving him has always spoke of her with kindness, and courted her return. He is said to be remarkably sweet tempered, and has the best character of any man of quality in this country. If the death of her women did not seem to confirm it, her accusation would gain credit with nobody. She is certainly very sincere in it herself, being so persuaded that he has resolved her death, that she dare not take the air, apprehending to be assassinated, and has imprisoned herself in her chamber, where she will neither eat nor drink any thing that she does not see tasted by all her servants. The physicians now say, that perhaps the poison might fall into the broth accidentally; I confess I do not perceive the possibility of it. As to the cook suffering the rack, that is a mere jest, where people have money enough to bribe the executioner. I decide nothing; but such is the present destiny of a lady, who would have been one of Richardson's heroines, having never been suspected of the least gallantry; hating, and being hated universally, of a most noble spirit, it being proverbial—"as proud as the "marchioness Licinia."

I am afraid I have tired you with my long story: I thought it singular enough to amuse you. I believe your censure will be different from that of the ladies here, who all range themselves in the party of the marquis Guido. They say he is a handsome man, little past forty, and would easily find a second wife, notwithstanding the suspicion raised on this occasion. Many customs, and some laws, are as extraordinary here as the situation of the capital.

I would write to lord Bute to thank him, if I did not think it would be giving him trouble. I have not less gratitude: I desire you would assure him of it, and that I am to you both your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER CCLXXIII.

The same to the same.

Louvere, June 10, 1757.

It is very true, (my dear child,) we cannot now maintain a family with the product of a flock, though I do not doubt the present sheep afford as much wool and milk as any of their ancestors; and 'tis certain our natural wants are not more numerous than formerly; but the

the world is past its infancy, and will no longer be contented with spoon meat. Time has added great improvements, but those very improvements have introduced a train of artificial necessities. A collective body of men make a gradual progress in understanding, like that of a single individual. When I reflect on the vast increase of useful, as well as speculative, knowledge, the last three hundred years has produced, and that the peasants of this age have more conveniences than the first Emperors of Rome had any notion of, I imagine we are now arrived at that period which answers to fifteen. I cannot think we are older, when I recollect the many palpable follies which are still (almost) universally persisted in: I place that of war as senseless as the boxing of school boys, and whenever we come to man's estate (perhaps a thousand years hence) I do not doubt it will appear as ridiculous as the pranks of unlucky lads. Several discoveries will then be made, and several truths made clear, of which we have now no more idea, than the ancients had of the circulation of the blood, or the optics of Sir Isaac Newton.

You will believe me in a very dull humour when I fill my letter with such whims, and indeed so I am. I have just received the news of Sir J. Gray's departure, and am exceedingly vexed I did not know of his designed journey. I suppose he would have carried my token; and now I utterly despair of an opportunity of sending it, and therefore enclose a note, on Child, for the value of it.

When you see Lady Rich pray do not fail to present my thanks and compliments. I desire the same to every body that thinks it worth while to inquire after me. You mention a Colonel Rich as her son; I thought he had been killed in Scotland. You see my entire ignorance of all English affairs, and consequently whatever you tell me of my acquaintance has the merit of novelty to me, who correspond with nobody but yourself and Lady Oxford, whose retirement and ill health does not permit her to send me much news.

I expect a letter of thanks from my grand-daughter. I wrote to my grandmother long before her age. I desire you would not see it, being willing to judge of her genius. I know I shall read it with some partiality, which I cannot avoid to all that is yours, as I am your most affectionate mother, &c.

LETTER CCLXXIV.

The same to the same.

Louvere, Sept. 30, 1757.

My dear Child,

Lord Bute has been so obliging as to let me know your safe delivery, and the birth of another daughter: may she be as meritorious in your eyes as you are in mine! I can wish nothing better to you both, though I have some reproaches to make you. Daughter! daughter! don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuff, are the titles you give to my favourite amusement. If I called a white staff a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensigns of illustrious orders coloured strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings; happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain: those hours are spent in the wisest manner, that can easiest shade the ills of life, and are the least productive of ill consequences. I think my time better employed in reading the adventures of imaginary people, than the Duchess of Marlborough, who passed the latter years of her life in paddling with her will, and contriving schemes of plaguing some, and extracting praise from others, to no purpose; eternally disappointed, and eternally fretting. The active scenes are over at my age. I indulge, with all the art I can, my taste for reading. If I would confine it to valuable books, they are almost as rare as valuable men. I must be content with what I can find. As I approach a second childhood, I endeavour to enter into the pleasures of it. Your youngest son is, perhaps, at this very moment riding on a poker, with great delight, not at all regretting that it is not a gold one, and much less wishing it an Arabian horse, which he could not know how to manage. I am reading an idle tale, not expecting wit or truth in it, and am very glad it is not metaphysics to puzzle my judgment, or history to mislead my opinion: he fortifies his

health by exercise; I calm my cares by oblivion. The methods may appear low to busy people; but, if he improves his strength, and I forget my infirmities, we both attain very desirable ends.

I have not heard from your father of a long time. I hope he is well, because you do not mention him. I am, &c.

LETTER CCLXXV.

The same to the same.

Padoua, Oct. 20, 1737.

I AM much obliged to you (my dear child) for the concern you express for me, in yours of July 10th, which I received yesterday, August 20th, but I can assure you I lose very little in not being visited by the English; boys and governors being commonly (not always) the worst company in the world. I am not otherwise affected by it, than as it has an ill appearance in a strange country, though hitherto I have not found any bad effect from it, among my Venetian acquaintance. I was visited, two days ago, by my good friend Cavalier Antonio Mocenigo, who came from Venice to present to me the elected husband of his brother's great grand-daughter, who is a noble Venetian, (Signor Zeno,) just of her age, heir to a large fortune, and is one of the most agreeable figures I ever saw; not beautiful, but has an air of so much modesty and good sense, I could easily believe all the good Signor Antonio said of him. They came to invite me to the wedding. I could not refuse such a distinction, but hope to find some excuse before the solemnity, being unwilling to throw away money on fine clothes, which are as improper for me as an embroidered pall for a coffin. But I durst not mention age before my friend, who told me that he is eighty-six. I thought him four years younger; he has all his senses perfect, and is as lively as a man of thirty. It was very pleasing to see the affectionate respect of the young man, and the fond joy that the old one took in praising him. They would have persuaded me to return with them to Venice; I objected that my house was not ready to receive me; Signor Antonio laughed, and asked me, if I did not think he could give me an apartment? (in truth it was very easy, having five palaces on a row, on the great canal, his own being the centre, and the others inhabited by his relations.) I was reduced to tell a fib, (God forgive me,) and pretend a pain in my head; promising to come to Venice before the marriage, which I really intend. They dined here; your health was the first drank; you may imagine I did not fail to toast the bride. She is yet in a convent, but is to be immediately released, and receive visits of congratulation on the contract, till the celebration of the church ceremony, which perhaps may not be this two months; during which time the lover makes a daily visit, and never comes without a present, which custom (at least some times) adds to the impatience of the bridegroom, and very much qualifies that of the lady. You would find it hard to believe a relation of the magnificence, not to say extravagance, on these occasions; indeed it is the only one they are guilty of, their lives in general being spent in a regular handsome economy; the weddings and the creation of a procurator being the only occasions they have of displaying their wealth, which is very great in many houses, particularly this of Mocenigo, of which my friend is the present head. I may justly call him so, giving me proofs of an attachment quite uncommon at London, and certainly disinterested, since I can no way possibly be of use to him. I could tell you some strong instances of it, if I did not remember you have not time to listen to my stories, and there is scarce room on my paper to assure you I am, my dear child, your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

The same to the same.

Padoua, July 17, 1738.

My dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours last night, which gave me a pleasure beyond what I am able to express (this is not according to the common expression, but a simple truth). I had not heard from you for some months, and was in my heart very uneasy, from the apprehension of some misfortune in your family; though, as I always endeavour to avoid the anticipation of evil, which is a source of pain, and

and can never be productive of any good, I stifled my fear as much as possible, yet it cost me many a midnight pang. You have been the passion of my life; you need thank me for nothing; I gratify myself whenever I can oblige you.

How important is the charge of youth! and how useless all the advantages of nature and fortune without a well turned mind! I have lately heard of a very shining instance of this truth, from two gentlemen, (very deserving ones they seem to be,) who have had the curiosity to travel into Muscovy, and now return to England with Mr. Archer. I inquired after my old acquaintance Sir Charles Williams, who I hear is much broken, both in his spirits and constitution. How happy might that man have been, if there had been added to his natural and acquired endowments a dash of morality! If he had known how to distinguish between false and true felicity; and, instead of seeking to encrease an estate already too large, and hunting after pleasures, that have made him rotten and ridiculous, he had bounded his desires of wealth, and followed the dictates of his conscience. His servile ambition has gained him two yards of red ribbon, and an exile into a miserable country, where there is no society and so little taste, that I believe he suffers under a dearth of flatterers. This is said for the use of your growing sons, whom I hope no golden temptations will induce to marry women they cannot love, or comply with measures they do not approve. All the happiness this world can afford is more within reach than is generally supposed. Whoever seeks pleasure will undoubtedly find pain; whoever will pursue ease will as certainly find pleasures. The world's esteem is the highest gratification of human vanity; and that is more easily obtained in a moderate fortune than an overgrown one, which is seldom possessed, never gained, without envy. I say esteem; for, as to applause it is a youthful pursuit, never to be forgiven after twenty, and naturally succeeds the childish desire of catching the setting sun, which I can remember running very hard to do; a fine thing truly if it could be caught; but experience soon shews it to be impossible. A wise and honest man lives to his own heart, without that silly splendour that makes him a prey to knaves, and which commonly ends in his becoming one of the fraternity. I am very glad to hear Lord Bute's decent economy sets him above any thing of that kind. I wish it may become national. A collective body of men differs very little from a single man; and frugality is the foundation of generosity. I have often been complimented on the English heroism, who have thrown away so many millions, without any prospect of advantage to themselves, purely to succour a distressed princess. I never could hear these praises without some impatience; they sounded to me like the panegyrics, made by the dependants, on the Duke of Newcastle and poor Lord Oxford, bubbled when they were commended and laughed at when they were undone. Some late events will, I hope, open our eyes: we shall see we are an island, and endeavour to extend our commerce rather than the Quixote reputation, of redressing wrongs and placing diadems on heads that should be equally indifferent to us. When time has ripened mankind into common sense, the name of conqueror will be an odious title. I could easily prove that, had the Spaniards established a trade with the Americans, they would have enriched their country more than by the addition of twenty-two kingdoms, and all the mines they now work—I do not say possess; since, though they are the proprietors, others enjoy the profit.

My letter is too long; I beg your pardon for it; 'tis seldom I have an opportunity of speaking to you, and I would have you know all the thoughts of your most affectionate mother, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

The same to the same.

Venice, Feb. 21, 1759.

My dear Child,

If half of the letters I have sent to you have reached you, I believe you think, I have always a pen in my hand; but, I am really so uneasy, by your long silence, I cannot forbear inquiring the reason of it, by all the methods I can imagine. My time of life is naturally inclined to fear; and though I resist (as well as I can) all the infirmities incident to age, I feel but too sensibly the

the impressions of melancholy, when I have any doubt of your welfare. You fancy, perhaps, that the public papers give me information enough; and, that when I do not see in them any misfortune of yours, I ought to conclude you have none. I can assure you I never see any, excepting by accident. Our resident has not the good breeding to send them to me; and, after having asked for them once or twice, and being told they were engaged, I am unwilling to demand a trifle at the expense of thanking a man who does not desire to oblige me; indeed, since the ministry of Mr. Pitt, he is so desirous to signalise his zeal for the contrary faction, he is perpetually saying ridiculous things, to manifest his attachment; and, as he looks upon me (nobody knows why) to be the friend of a man I never saw, he has not visited me once this winter. The misfortune is not great. I cannot help laughing at my being mistaken for a politician. I have often been so, though I ever thought politics so far removed from my sphere. I cannot accuse myself of dabbling in them, even when I heard them talked over in all companies; but, as the old song says,

Tho' through the wide world we should range,
'Tis in vain from our fortune to fly.

I forget myself and tattle on, without remembering you are too much employed to throw away time on reading insignificant letters; you should however forgive them, in consideration of the real affection of your very loving mother, &c.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

Lady M. W. Montagu to Mr. Wortley.

Venice, Feb. 24, 1759.

I RETURN you many thanks for yours of the 5th instant. I never have received any in so short a time from England. I am very sincerely, heartily, glad to hear of your health, but will not trouble you with reading a long letter, which may be uneasy to you, when I write so often and fully to our daughter. I have not heard from her of some time; I hope her silence is not occasioned by any indisposition. I hear her and her family praised very much by every Briton that arrives here. I need not say what comfort I receive from it. It is now finer weather than I ever saw in the season, (Naples excepted); the sun shines with as much warmth as in May. I walk in my little garden every morning. I hope you do the same at Bath.

The carnival is now over, and we have no more ridotto or theatrical amusements. Diversions have taken a more private, perhaps, a more agreeable, turn here. It is the fashion to have little houses of retreat, where the lady goes every evening, at seven or eight o'clock, and is visited by all her intimates of both sexes, which commonly amount to seventy or eighty persons, where they have play, concerts of music, sometimes dancing, and always a handsome collation. I believe you will think these little assemblies very pleasing; they really are so. Whoever is well acquainted with Venice must own that it is the centre of pleasure; not so noisy, and, in my opinion, more refined than Paris. The young Earl of Northampton is now at Florence, and was here in the carnival. He is lively and good natured, with what is called a pretty figure. I believe he is of a humour likely to fall in love with many; the first agreeable girl he meets with in London. I send this by a gentleman who is just returned from making a very extraordinary journey. I dined with him yesterday at General Graham's. He is a sensible man, and gives a good account of his plan. Almost all books are either defective or fabulous. I have observed, that the only true intelligence of distant countries is to be had from those who have passed them, without a design of publishing their remarks.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Bute.

Genoa, Dec. 8, 1759.

My dear Child,

I RECEIVED yours, of October 24, yesterday, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of the good health of you and yours; I need not say how near that is to my heart. I had the satisfaction

tion of an entertaining letter from your father, out of Germany, by which I find he has had both benefit and amusement from his travels. I hope he is now with you.

I find you have many wrong notions of Italy, which I do not wonder at. You can take your ideas of it only from books or travellers; the first are generally antiquated or confined to trite observations, and the other yet more superficial; they return no more instructed than they might have been at home, by the help of a map. The boys only remember where they met with the best wine or the prettiest women; and the governors (I speak of the most learned amongst them) have only remarked situations and distances, or, at most, statues and edifices, as every girl that can read a French novel, and boy that can construe a scene in Terence, fancies they have attained to the French and Latin languages, when, God knows, it requires the study of a whole life to acquire a perfect knowledge of either of them: so, after a tour (as they call it) of three years, round Europe, people think themselves qualified to give exact accounts of the customs, politics, and interests of the dominions they have gone through post; when a very long stay, a diligent inquiry, and a nice observation, are requisite even to a moderate degree of knowing a foreign country, especially here, where they are naturally very reserved. France indeed is more easily seen through; the French always talking of themselves, and the government being the same, there is little difference from one province to another; but, in Italy, the different laws make different customs and manners. There are many things very particular here, from the singularity of the government; some of which I do not care to touch upon, and some are still in use here, though obsolete in almost all other places, as the estates of all the great families, being unalienable, as they were formerly in England. This would have made them very potent, if it were not balanced by another law, that divides whatever land the father dies possessed of among all the sons, the eldest having no advantage, but the finest house and best furniture, which occasions numerous branches and few large fortunes, with a train of consequences you may imagine. But I cannot let pass in silence the prodigious alteration, since Misson's writing, in regard to our sex. This reformation (or, if you please, depravation) begun so lately as the year 1732, when the French over-run this part of Italy, but it has been carried on with such fervour and success, that the Italians go far beyond their patterns, the Parisian ladies, in the extent of their liberty. I am not so much surprised at the women's conduct, as I am amazed at the change in the men's sentiments. Jealousy, which was once a point of honour among them, is exploded to that degree, that it is become the most infamous and ridiculous of all characters; and you cannot more affront a gentleman, than to suppose him capable of it. Divorces are also introduced, and frequent enough; they have long been in fashion in Genoa; several of the finest and greatest ladies there having two husbands alive.

I am afraid you will think this a long letter; but you tell me that you are without company, and in solitude, though yours appears to me to be a sort of paradise. You have an agreeable habitation, a pleasant garden, a man you love and who loves you, and are surrounded with a numerous and hopeful progeny. May they all prove comforts to your age! That and all other blessings are daily wished for you by, my dear child, your, &c.

FROM THE LETTERS OF EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.

LETTER CCLXXX.

Mr. Gibbon to Mrs. Porten.

Lausanne, 1756.

FEAR no reproaches for your negligence, however great; for your silence, however long. I love you too well to make you any. Nothing, in my opinion, is so ridiculous as some kind of friends, wives, and lovers, who look on no crime as so heinous as the letting slip a post without writing. The charm of friendship is liberty; and he that would destroy

the one, destroys, without designing it, the better half of the other. I compare friendship to charity, and letters to alms; the last signifies nothing without the first, and very often the first is very strong, although it does not shew itself by the other. It is not good-will which is wanting, it is only opportunities or means. However, one month—two months—three months—four months! I began not to be angry, but to be uneasy, for fear some accident had happened to you. I was often on the point of writing, but was always stopped by the hopes of hearing from you the next post. Besides, not to flatter you, your excuse is a very bad one. *You cannot entertain me by your letters.* I think I ought to know that better than you; and I assure you that one of *your plain sincere letters* entertains me more than the most polished one of Pliny or Cicero. 'Tis your heart speaks, and I look on your heart as much better in its way than either of their heads.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

Mr. Gibbon to his Father.

Dear Sir, 1760.

An address in writing, from a person who has the pleasure of being with you every day, may appear singular. However, I have preferred this method, as upon paper I can speak without a blush, and be heard without interruption. If my letter displeases you, impute it, dear Sir, only to yourself. You have treated me, not like a son, but like a friend. Can you be surprised that I should communicate to a friend, all my thoughts, and all my desires? Unless the friend approve them, let the father never know them; or at least, let him know at the same time, that however reasonable, however eligible, my scheme may appear to me, I would rather forget it for ever, than cause him the slightest uneasiness.

When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in parliament. This seat, it was supposed would be an expence of fifteen hundred pounds. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that by the means of this seat I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end; and a very short examination discovered to me, that those talents had not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear Sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity, and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to allege my deficiency in them, would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which nature alone can bestow. That my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life. That even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet, than for the extemporary discourses of the parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others, what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating, while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party, and of nation. In popular assemblies, it is often necessary to inspire them; and never orator inspired well a passion, which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character; to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce, offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say, it is not necessary that every man should enter into parliament with such exalted hopes. It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives, in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious, yet are not dishonourable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expence, or if our fortune

tune enabled us to despise that expence, then indeed I should think them of the greatest strength. But with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase at so high a rate, a title, honourable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out fifteen hundred pounds? Besides, dear Sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner, when he is resolved not to sell it.

I should affront your penetration, did I not suppose you now see the drift of this letter. It is to appropriate to another use the sum with which you destined to bring me into parliament; to employ it, not in making me great, but in rendering me happy. I have often heard you say yourself, that the allowance you had been so indulgent as to grant me, though very liberal in regard to your estate, was yet but small, when compared with the almost necessary extravagances of the age. I have indeed found it so, notwithstanding a good deal of œconomy, and an exemption from many of the common expences of youth. This, dear Sir, would be a way of supplying these deficiencies, without any additional expence to you. —But I forbear.—If you think my proposals reasonable, you want no entreaties to engage you to comply with them! if otherwise, all will be without effect.

All that I am afraid of, dear Sir, is, that I should seem not so much asking a favour, as this really is, as exacting a debt. After all I can say, you will still remain the best judge of my good, and your own circumstances. Perhaps, like most landed gentlemen, an addition to my annuity would suit you better, than a sum of money given at once; perhaps the sum itself may be too considerable. Whatever you shall think proper to bestow upon me, or in whatever manner, will be received with equal gratitude.

I intended to stop here; but as I abhor the least appearance of art, I think it will be better to lay open my whole scheme at once. The unhappy war which now desolates Europe, will oblige me to defer seeing France till a peace. But that reason can have no influence upon Italy, a country which every scholar must long to see; should you grant my request, and not disapprove of my manner of employing your bounty, I would leave England this autumn, and pass the winter at Lausanne, with M. de Voltaire and my old friends. The armies no longer obstruct my passage, and it must be indifferent to you, whether I am at Lausanne or at London during the winter, since I shall not be at Beriton. In the spring I would cross the Alps, and after some stay in Italy, as the war must then be terminated, return home through France; to live happily with you and my dear mother. I am now two-and-twenty; a tour must take up a considerable time, and though I believe you have no thoughts of settling me soon, (and I am sure I have not,) yet so many things may intervene, that the man who does not travel early, runs a great risk of not travelling at all. But this part of my scheme, as well as the whole, I submit entirely to you.

Permit me, dear Sir, to add, that I do not know whether the complete compliance with my wishes could increase my love and gratitude; but that I am very sure, no refusal could diminish those sentiments with which I shall always remain, dear Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq.

Beriton, April 29, 1767.

Dear Holroyd,

I HAPPENED to-night to stumble upon a very odd piece of intelligence in the St. James's Chronicle; it related to the marriage of a certain Monsieur Olroy, formerly Captain of Hussars. I do not know how it came into my head that this Captain of Hussars was not unknown to me, and that he might possibly be an acquaintance of yours. If I am not mistaken in my conjecture, pray give my compliments to him, and tell him from me, that I am at least as well pleased that he is married as if I were so myself. Assure him, however, that though as a philosopher I may prefer celibacy, yet as a politician I think it highly proper that the species should be propagated by the usual method; assure him even that I am convinced, that if celibacy is exposed to fewer miseries, marriage can alone promise real happiness, since dometic enjoyments are the source of every other good. May such happiness, which is bestowed on few, be given to him; the transient blessings of beauty,

beauty, and the more durable ones of fortune, good sense, and an amiable disposition.

I can easily conceive, and as easily excuse you, if you have thought mighty little this winter of your poor rusticated friend. I have been confined ever since Christmas, and confined by a succession of very melancholy occupations. I had scarcely arrived at Beriton, where I proposed staying only about a fortnight, when a brother of Mrs. Gibbon's died unexpectedly, though after a very long and painful illness. We were scarcely recovered from the confusion which such an event must produce in a family, when my father was taken dangerously ill, and with some intervals has continued so ever since. I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate; or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility that would do us no great honour were it real. My father is now much better; but I have since been assailed by a severe stroke—the loss of a friend. You remember, perhaps, an officer of our militia, whom I sometimes used to compare to yourself. Indeed, the comparison would have done honour to any one. His feelings were tender and noble, and he was always guided by them: his principles were just and generous, and he acted up to them. I shall say no more, and you will excuse my having said so much, of a man with whom you were unacquainted; but my mind is just now so very full of him, that I cannot easily talk, or even think, of any thing else. If I know you right, you will not be offended at my *weakness*.

What rather adds to my uneasiness, is the necessity I am under of joining our militia the day after to-morrow. Though the lively hurry of such a scene might contribute to divert my ideas, yet every circumstance of it, and the place itself, (which was that of his residence,) will give me many a painful moment. I know nothing would better raise my spirits than a visit from you; the request may appear unseasonable, but I think I have heard you speak of *an uncle* you had near Southampton. At all events, I hope you will snatch a moment to write to me, and give me some account of your present situation and future designs. As you are now fettered, I should expect you will not be such a *hic et ubique*, as you have been since your arrival in England. I stay at Southampton from the first to the twenty eighth of May, and then propose making a short visit to town: if you are any where in the neighbourhood of it, you may depend upon seeing me. I shall then concert measures for seeing a little more of you next winter, than I have lately done, as I hope to take a pretty long spell in town. I suppose Guise has often fallen in your way: he has never once written to me, nor I to him: in the country we want materials, and in London we want time. I ought to recollect, that you even want time to read my unmeaning scrawl. Believe, however, my dear Holroyd, that it is the sincere expression of a heart entirely yours.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

The same to the same.

October 6, 1771.

Dear Holroyd,

I SIT down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride.—A ride! and upon what?—Upon a horse.—*You lie!*—I don't.—I have got a droll little poney, and intend to renew the long forgotten practice of equitation, as it was known in the world before the second of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. As I used to reason against riding, so I can now argue for it; and indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm, that I am of no use here? farmer Gibbon of no use? *Last week* I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man. Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill fair, but that would have been an additional expence, and a great uncertainty. Our quantity has disappointed us very much; but I think, that besides hops for the family, there will not be less than 500l.;—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only. *This week* I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from 25l. to 35l. *per annum*: and farmer Gibbon of no use!

To be serious; I have but one reason for resisting your invitation, and my own wishes; that is, Mrs. Gibbon I left nearly alone all last winter, and shall do the same this. She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present. I know you so well, that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason; and let me make my next visit to Sheffield-Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas. I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour into Bucks. Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. Holroyd, Esq. at Edinburgh.

Bentinck-street, Aug. 7, 1773.

Dear Holroyd,

I BEG ten thousand pounds for not being dead, as I certainly ought to be. But such is my abject nature, that I had rather live in Bentinck-street, attainted and convicted of the sin of laziness, than enjoy your applause either at Old Nick's or even in the Elysian Fields. After all, could you expect that I should honour with my correspondence a wild barbarian of the Bogs of Erin? Had the natives intercepted my letter, the terrors occasioned by such unknown magic characters might have been fatal to you. But now you have escaped the fury of their hospitality, and are arrived among a cee-vi-leezed nation, I may venture to renew my intercourse.

You tell me of a long list of dukes, lords, and chieftains of renown to whom you are introduced; were I with you, I should prefer one *David* to them all. When you are at Edinburgh, I hope you will not fail to visit the stye of that fattest of Epicurus's hogs, and inform yourself whether there remains no hope of its recovering the use of its right paw. There is another animal of *great*, though not perhaps of *equal*, and certainly not of *similar* merit, one Robertson; has he almost created the new world? Many other men you have undoubtedly seen, in the country where you are at present, who must have commanded your esteem: but when you return, if you are not very honest, you will possess great advantages over me in any dispute concerning Caledonian merit.

Boodle's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Godfrey Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles; and I now enjoy, in the midst of London, a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties with new acquaintance who are chained to London, (among whom I reckon Goldsmith and Sir Joshua Reynolds,) fill up my time, and the monster *Ennui* preserves a very respectful distance. By the bye, your friends Batt, Sir John Russel, and Lascelles, dined with me one day before they set off; for I sometimes give the prettiest little dinner in the world. But all this composure draws near its conclusion. About the sixteen of this month Mr. Eliot carries me away, and after picking up Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, sets me down at Port Eliot; there I shall remain six weeks, or, in other words, to the end of September. My future motions, whether to London, Derbyshire, or a longer stay in Cornwall, (pray is not "motion to stay" rather in the Hibernian style?) will depend on the life of Port Eliot, the time of the meeting of parliament, and perhaps the impatience of Mr. ******, Lord of Lenborough. One of my pleasures in town I forgot to mention, the unexpected visit of Deyverdun, who accompanies his young lord (very young indeed!) on a two month's tour to England. He took the opportunity of the Earl's going down to the Duke of *******, to spend a fortnight (nor do I recollect a more pleasant one) in Bentinck-street. They are now gone together into Yorkshire, and I think it doubtful whether I shall see him again before his return to Leipsic. It is a melancholy reflection, that while one is plagued with acquaintance at the corner of every street, real friends should be separated from each other by unsurmountable bars, and obliged to catch at a few transient moments of interview. I desire that you and my Lady (whom I most repectfully greet) would take your share of that very new and acute observation, not so large a share indeed as my Swiss friend, since nature and fortune give *us* more frequent opportunities of being together. You cannot expect news from a desert, and such is London at present. The papers give you the full harvest of public intelligence; and

and I magine that the eloquent nymphs of Twickenham communicate all the transactions of the polite, the amorous, and the marrying world. The great pantomime of Portsmouth was universally admired; and I am angry at my own laziness in neglecting an excellent opportunity of seeing it. Foote has given us the Bankrupt, a serious and sentimental piece, with very severe strictures on the licence of scandal in attacking private characters. Adieu. Forgive and epistolize me. I shall not believe you sincere in the former, unless you make Bentinck-street your inn. I fear I shall be gone; but Mrs. Ford and the parrot will be proud to receive you and my Lady after your long peregrination, from which I expect great improvements. Has she got the brogue upon the tip of her tongue?

LETTER CCLXXXV.

The same to the same.

Port-Eliot, September 10th, 1773.

Dear Holroyd,

By this time you have surely finished your tour, touched at Edinburgh, where you found a letter, which you have not answered, and are now contemplating the beauties of the Weald of Sussex. I shall demand a long and particular account of your peregrinations, but will excuse it till we meet; and for the present expect only a short memorandum of your health and situation, together with that of my much-honoured friend Mrs. Abigail Holroyd. A word too, if you please, concerning father and sister; to the latter I enclose a receipt from Mrs. G. who is now with me at Port Eliot.

Blind as you accuse me of being to the beauties of nature, I am wonderfully pleased with this country. Of her three dull notes, *ground*, *plants*, and *water*, Cornwall possesses the first and last in very high perfection. Think of a hundred solitary streams peacefully gliding between amazing cliffs on one side, and rich meadows on the other, gradually swelling by the aid of the tide into noble rivers, successively losing themselves in each other, and all at length terminating in the harbour of Plymouth, whose broad expanse is irregularly *dotted* with two-and-forty line of battle ships. In plants indeed we are deficient; and though all the gentlemen now attend to posterity, the country will for a long time be very naked. We have spent several days agreeably enough in little parties; but in general our time rolls away in complete uniformity. Our landlord possesses neither a pack of hounds, nor a stable of running horses, nor a large farm, nor a good library. The last only could interest me; but it is singular that a man of fortune, who chooses to pass nine months of the year in the country, should have none of them.

According to our present design, Mrs. G. and myself return to Bath about the beginning of next month. I shall probably make but a short stay with her, and defer my Derbyshire journey till another year. Sufficient for the summer is the evil thereof, viz. one distant country excursion. Natural inclination, the prosecution of my great work, and the conclusion of my Lenborough business, plead strongly in favour of London. However I desire, and one always finds time for what one really desires, to visit Sheffield-Place before the end of October, should it only be for a few days. I know several houses where I am invited to think myself at home, but I know no other where I seem inclined to accept of the invitation. I forgot to tell you, that I have declined the publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. The public will see them, and upon the whole, I think, with pleasure; but the family were strongly bent against it; and especially on Deyverdun's account, I deemed it more prudent to avoid making them my personal enemies.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

The same to the same.

January 29, 1774.

I am now getting acquainted with authors, managers, &c. good company to know, but not to live with. Yesterday I dined at the British Coffee-house, with Garrick, Coleman, Goldsmith, Macpherson, John Hume, &c. I am this moment come from Coleman's Man of Business. We dined at the Shakespeare, and went in a body to support it. Between friends, though we got a verdict for our client, his cause was

but

but a bad one. It is a very confused miscellany of several plays and tales; sets out brilliantly enough, but as we advance the plot grows thicker, the wit thinner, till the lucky fall of the curtain preserves us from total chaos.

Bentinck-street has visited Welbeck-street. Sappho is very happy that she is there yet: on Sheffield-place she squints with regret and gratitude. Mamma consulted me about buying coals; we cannot get any round ones. Quintus is gone to head the civil war. Of Mrs. * * * * I have nothing to say. I have got my intelligence for insuring, and will immediately get the preservative against fire. Foster has sent me eight-and-twenty pair of Paris silk stockings, with an intimation that my lady wished for half-a-dozen. They are much at her service; but if she will look into David Hume's Essay on National Characters, she will see that I durst not offer them to a Queen of Spain. *Sachez qu'une reine d'Espagne n'a point de jambes.* Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

The same to the same.

April 13th, 1774.

At length I am a little more at liberty. Godfrey Clarke goes out of town this morning. Instead of going directly into Derbyshire, where he would have been overwhelmed with visits, &c. he has taken his sister, brother, and aunts to a villa near Farnham, in which he has the happiness of having no neighbourhood. If my esteem and friendship for Godfrey had been capable of any addition, it would have been very much increased by the manner in which he felt and lamented his father's death. He is now in very different circumstances than before; instead of an easy and ample allowance, he has taken possession of a great estate, with low rents and high incumbrances. I hope the one may make amends for the other: under your conduct I am sure they would, and I have freely offered him your assistance, in case he should wish to apply for it.

In the mean time I must not forget my own affairs, which seem to be covered with inextricable perplexity. * * *, as I mentioned about a century ago, promised to see * * * and his attorney, and to oil the wheels of the arbitration. As yet I have not heard from him. I have some thoughts of writing *myself* to the jockey, stating the various steps of the affair, and offering him, with polite firmness, the *immediate* choice of chancery or arbitration.

For the time, however, I forgot all these difficulties, in the present enjoyment of Deyverdun's company; and I glory in thinking, that although my house is small, it is just of a sufficient size to hold my real friends, male and *female*; among the latter my Lady holds the very first place.

We are all quiet.—American business is suspended and almost forgot. The other day we had a brisk report of a Spanish war. It was said they had taken one of our Leeward Islands. It since turns out, that we are the invaders, but the invasion is trifling.

Bien obligé non (at present) for your invitation. I wish my Lady and you would come up to our masquerade the third of May. The finest thing ever seen. We sup in a transparent temple that costs four hundred and fifty pounds.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

The same to the same.

Bentinck-street, Sept. 10th, 1774.

Since Heberden is returned, I think the road lies plain before you, I mean the turnpike road; the only party which in good sense can be embraced is, without delay, to bring my Lady to Bentinck-street, where you may inhabit two or three nights, and have any advice (Turton, Heberden, &c.) which the town may afford, in a case that most assuredly ought not to be trifled with. Do this as you value our good opinion. The Cantabs are strongly in the same sentiments. There can be no apprehensions of late hours, &c. as none of Mrs. H.'s raking acquaintance are in town. * * * * * You give me no account of the works. When do you inhabit the library? *Turn over—great things await you.*

It is surely infinite condescension for a senator to bestow his attention on the affairs of a juryman. A senator? Yes, Sir, at last

——— Quod . . . . Diyûm promittere nemo
Anderet, volvenda dies, en attulit ultro.———

Yesterday morning, about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of Barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend * * * * * was soon introduced. After some idle conversation he told me, that if I was desirous of being in parliament, he had an *independent* seat very much at my service. * * * * This is a fine prospect opening upon me, and if next spring I should take my seat, and publish my book, it will be a very memorable æra in my life. I am ignorant whether my borough will be * . You despise boroughs, and fly at nobler game. Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

The same to the same.

Boodle's, Jan. 31st, 1775.

Sometimes people do not write because they are too idle, and sometimes because they are too busy. The former was usually my case, but at present it is the latter. The fate of Europe and America seems fully sufficient to take up the time of one man; and especially of a man who gives up a great deal of time for the purpose of public and private information. I think I have sucked Mauduit and Hutcheson very dry; and if my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events, I fancy I shall try to expose myself.

Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam?

For my own part, I am more and more convinced that we have both the right and the power on our side, and that, though the effort may be accompanied with some melancholy circumstances, we are now arrived at the decisive moment of preserving, or of losing for ever, both our trade and empire. We expect next Thursday or Friday to be a very great day. Hitherto we have been chiefly employed in reading papers, and rejecting petitions. Petitions were brought from London, Bristol, Norwich, &c. framed by party, and designed to delay. By the aid of some parliamentary quirks, they have been all referred to a separate inactive committee, which Burke calls a committee of oblivion, and are now considered as dead in law. I could write you fifty little House of Commons stories, but from their number and nature they suit a conference better than a letter. Our general divisions are about two hundred and fifty to eighty or ninety. Adieu.

LETTER CCXC.

The same to the same.

February 8th, 1775.

I am not d——d, according to your charitable wishes, because I have not acted; there was such an inundation of speakers, young speakers in every sense of the word, both on Thursday in the grand committee, and Monday on the report to the House, that neither Lord George Germaine nor myself could find room for a single word. The principal men both days were Fox and Wedderburne, on the opposite sides; the latter displayed his usual talents; the former, taking the vast compass of the question before us, discovered powers for regular debate, which neither his friends hoped, nor his enemies dreaded. We voted an address, (three hundred and four to one hundred and five,) of lives and fortunes, declaring Massachussets Bay in a state of rebellion. More troops, but I fear not enough, go to America, to make an army of ten thousand men at Boston; three generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. In a few days we stop the ports of New England. I cannot write volumes; but I am more and more convinced, that with firmness all may go well; yet I sometimes doubt. I am now writing with ladies, (Sir S. Porten and his bride,) and two card-tables, in the library. As to my silence, judge of my situation by last Monday. I am on the Grenvillian committee of Downton. We always sit from ten to three and a half; after which, that day, I went into the House, and sat till three in the morning. Adieu.

LETTER CCXCI.

The same to the same.

February 25th, 1775.

WE go on with regard to America, if we can be said to go on; for on last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the Colonies to tax themselves, was introduced by Lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the House in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain; till at length Sir Gilbert declared for administration, and the troops all rallied under their proper standard. On Wednesday we had the Middlesex election. I was a patriot: sat by the Lord Mayor, who spoke well, and with temper, but before the end of the debate fell fast asleep. I am still a mute; it is more tremendous than I imagined; the great speakers fill me with despair, the bad ones with terror.

When do you move? My Lady answered like a woman of sense, spirit, and good nature. Neither she nor I could bear it. She was right, and the Duchess of Braganza would have made the same answer. Adieu.

LETTER CCXCII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to Mrs. Gibbon.

March 30th, 1775.

Dear Madam,

I HARDLY know how to take up the pen. I talked in my last of two or three posts, and I am almost ashamed to calculate how many have elapsed. I will endeavour for the future to be less scandalous. Only believe that my heart is innocent of the laziness of my hand. I do not mean to have recourse to the stale and absurd excuse of business, though I have really had a very considerable hurry of new parliamentary business, one day, for instance, of seventeen hours, from ten in the morning till between three and four the next morning. It is, upon the whole, an agreeable improvement in my life, and forms just the mixture of business, of study, and of society, which I always imagined I should, and now find I do like. Whether the House of Commons may ever prove of benefit to myself or country, is another question. As yet I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs, I have sometimes had a wish to speak, but though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded exposing myself in the manner, and remained in my seat safe, but inglorious. Upon the whole, (though I still believe I shall try,) I doubt whether Nature, not that in some instances I am ungrateful, has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into parliament much too late to exert them. Do you hear of Port Eliot coming to Bath? and, above all, do you hear of Charles-street coming to Bentinck-street, in its way to Essex, &c. Adieu. Dear Madam, &c.

LETTER CCXCIII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to J. B. Holroyd, Esq.

Bentinck-street, Aug. 1st, 1775.

YOUR apprehensions of a precipitate work, &c. are perfectly groundless. I should be much more addicted to a contrary extreme. The *head* is now printing: true, but it was written last year and the year before. The first chapter has been composed *de nouveau three times*; the second *twice*, and all the others have undergone reviews, corrections, &c. As to the tail, it is perfectly formed and digested, (and were I so much given to self-content and haste,) it is almost all written. The ecclesiastical part, for instance, is written out in fourteen sheets, which I mean to *refondre* from beginning to end. As to the friendly critic, it is very difficult to find one who has leisure, candour, freedom, and knowledge sufficient. However, Batt and Deyverdun have read and observed. After all, the public is the best critic. I print no more than five hundred copies of first of the edition; and the second (as it frequently happens to my betters) may receive many improvements. So much for Rome. We have nothing new from America. But I can venture to assure you, that administration is now as unanimous and decided as the occasion requires.

quires. Something will be done this year; but in the spring the force of the country will be exerted to the utmost. Scotch Highlanders, Irish Papists, Hanoverians, Canadians, Indians, &c. will all in various shapes be employed. Parliament meets the first week in November. I think his Catholic Majesty may be satisfied with his summer's amusement. The Spaniards fought with great bravery, and made a fine retreat; but our Algerine friends surpassed them as much in conduct as in number. Adieu.

LETTER CCXCIV.

The same to the same.

Almack's, June 24th, 1776.

YES, yes, I am alive, and well; but what shall I say? Town grows empty, and this house, where I have passed very agreeable hours, is the only place which still unites the flower of the English youth. The stile of living, though *somewhat* expensive, is exceedingly pleasant, and, notwithstanding the rage of play, I have found more entertaining, and even rational society here, than in any other club to which I belong. Mrs. Gibbon still hangs in suspense, and seems to consider a town-expedition with horror. I think, however, that she will be soon in motion; and when I have her in Bentinck-street, we shall perhaps talk of a Sheffield excursion. I am now deeply engaged in the reign of Constantine, and, from the specimens which I have already seen, I can venture to promise, that the second volume will not be less interesting than the first. The fifteen hundred copies are moving off with decent speed, and the obliging Cadell seems to mutter something of a third edition for next year. No news of Deyverdun, or his French translation. What a lazy dog! Madame Necker has been gone a great while. I gave her, *en partant*, the most solemn assurances of following her *paws* in less than two months; but the voice of indolence begins to whisper a thousand difficulties, and unless your absurd policy should thoroughly provoke me, the Parisian journey may possibly be deferred. I rejoice in the progress of * * * * towards light. We are in expectation of American news. Carleton is made a Knight of the Bath. The old report of Washington's resignation, and quarrel with the Congress, seems to revive. Adieu.

LETTER CCXCV.

The same to the same.

Paris, August 13, 1777.

WELL, and who is the culprit now? —Thus far had I written in the pride of my heart, and fully determined to inflict an epistle upon you, even before I received any answer to my former; I was very near a bull. But this forward half line lays ten days barren and inactive, till its generative powers were excited by the missive which I received yesterday. What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it in America? The greatest force which any European power ever ventured to transport into that continent, is not strong enough even to attack the enemy; the naval strength of Great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of Rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the mean time you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coasts against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French court, but I choose to decline that task for two reasons: 1st, Because, you may find them laid open in every newspaper; and 2dly, Because I live too much with their courtiers and ministers to know any thing about them. I shall only say, that I am not under any immediate apprehensions of a war with France. It is much more pleasant as well as profitable to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick up some pieces of the wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture, and their finances, while the two countries are *lento collisa duello*. Far from taking any step to put a speedy end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surprised if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England, as to the weaker party. As to my personal engagement with the D. of R. I recollect a few slight skirmishes, but nothing that deserves the name of a general engagement. The extravagance of some disputants, both French and

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English, who have espoused the cause of America, sometimes inspires me with an extraordinary vigour. Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the justice than the policy of our measures; but there are certain cases, where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just.

The more I see of Paris, the more I like it. The regular course of the society in which I live is easy, polite, and entertaining; and almost every day is marked by the acquisition of some new acquaintance, who is worth cultivating, or who, at least, is worth remembering. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a citizen of the world. The spectacles, (particularly the Italian, and above all the French Comedies,) which are open the whole summer, afford me an agreeable relaxation from company; and to shew you that I frequent them from taste, and not from idleness, I have not yet seen the Colisee, the Vauxhall, the Boulvards, or any of those places of entertainment which constitute Paris to most of our countrymen. Occasional trips to dine or sup in some of the thousand country-houses which are scattered round the environs of Paris, serve to vary the scene. In the mean while the summer insensibly glides away, and the fatal month of October approaches, when I must change the house of Madame Necker for the House of Commons. I regret that I could not choose the winter, instead of the summer, for this excursion: I should have found many valuable persons, and should have preserved others whom I have lost as I began to know them. The Duke de Choiseul, who deserves attention both for himself and for keeping the best house in Paris, passes seven months of the year in Touraine; and though I have been tempted, I consider with horror a journey of sixty leagues into the country. The Princess of Beauveau, who is a most superior woman, had been absent about six weeks, and does not return till the 24th of this month. A large body of recruits will be assembled by the Fontainbleau journey; but in order to have a thorough knowledge of this splendid country, I ought to stay till the month of January; and if I could be sure that Opposition would be as tranquil as they were last year. — I think your life has been as animated, or, at least, as tumultuous, and I envy you Lady Payne, &c. much more than either the Primate, or the Chief-justice. Let not the generous breast of my Lady be torn by the black serpents of envy. She still possesses the first place in the sentiments of her slave: but the adventure of the fan was a mere accident, owing to Lord Carmarthen. Adieu. I think you may be satisfied. I say nothing of my terrestrial affairs.

LETTER CCXCVI.

The same to the same.

February 6th, 1779.

You are quiet and peaceable, and do not bark, as usual, at my silence. To reward you, I would send you some news, but we are asleep; no foreign intelligence, except the capture of a frigate; no certain accounts from the West Indies, and a dissolution of parliament, which seems to have taken place since Christmas. In the papers you will see negociations, changes of departments, &c. and I have *some* reason to believe that those reports are not entirely without foundation. Portsmouth is no longer an object of speculation; the whole stream of all men, and all parties, run one way. Sir Hugh is disgraced, ruined, &c. &c.; and as an old wound has broken out again, they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time. In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination, from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow-chandlers; the last are not the least sincere. I want to hear some details of your military and familiar proceedings. By your silence I suppose you admire Davis, and dislike my pamphlet; yet such is the public folly, that we have a second edition in the press: the fashionable style of the clergy, is to say they have not read it. If Maria does not take care, I shall write a much sharper invective against her, for *not* answering my diabolical book. My Lady carried it down, with a solemn promise that I should receive an *unassisted* French letter. Yet I embrace the little animal, as well as my Lady, and the *Spes altera Romæ*. Adieu.

There is a buz about a peace, and Spanish mediation.

LETTER CCXCVII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, September 30th, 1783.

I ARRIVED safe in harbour last Saturday, the 27th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning; but as the post only goes out twice a week, it was not in my power to write before this day. Except one day, between Langres and Besançon, which was laborious enough, I finished my easy and gentle airing without any fatigue, either of mind or body. I found Deyverdun well and happy, but much more happy at the sight of a friend, and the accomplishment of a scheme which he had so long and impatiently desired. His garden, terrace, and park, have even exceeded the most sanguine of my expectations and remembrances; and you yourself cannot have forgotten the charming prospect of the lake, the mountains, and the declivity of the Pays de Vaud. But as human life is perpetually chequered with good and evil, I have found some disappointments on my arrival. The easy nature of Deyverdun, his indolence, and his impatience, had prompted him to reckon too positively that his house would be vacant at Michaelmas; some unforeseen difficulties have arisen, or have been discovered when it was already too late, and the consummation of our hopes is (I am much afraid) postponed to next spring. At first I was knocked down by the unexpected thunder-bolt, but I have gradually been reconciled to my fate, and have granted a free and gracious pardon to my friend. As his own apartment, which afforded me a temporary shelter, is much too narrow for a settled residence, we hired for the winter a convenient ready-furnished apartment in the nearest part of the Rue de Bourg, whose back door leads in three steps to the terrace and garden, as often as a tolerable day shall tempt us to enjoy their beauties; and this arrangement has even its advantage, of giving us time to deliberate and provide, before we enter on a larger and more regular establishment. But this is not the sum of my misfortunes; hear, and pity! The day after my arrival (Sunday) we had just finished a temperate dinner, and intended a round of visits on foot, *chapeau sous le bras*, when, most unfortunately, Deyverdun proposed to shew me something in the court; we boldly and successfully ascended a flight of stone steps, but in the descent I missed my footing, and strained, or sprained, my ancle in a painful manner. My old latent enemy, (I do not mean the Devil,) who is always on the watch, has made an ungenerous use of his advantage, and I much fear that my arrival at Lausanne will be marked with a fit of the gout, though it is quite unnecessary that the intelligence or suspicion should find its way to Bath. Yesterday afternoon I lay, or at least sat, in state to receive visits, and at the same moment my room was filled with four different nations. The loudest of these nations was the single voice of the Abbé Raynal, who, like your friend, has chosen this place for the asylum of freedom and history. His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world. Adieu. I embrace my Lady, and the infants. With regard to the important transactions for which you are constituted plenipotentiary, I expect with some impatience, but with perfect confidence, the result of your labours. You may remember what I mentioned of my conversation with * * * * * about the place of Minister at Bern: I have talked it over with Deyverdun, who does not dislike the idea, provided this place was allowed to be my villa, during at least two-thirds of the year; but for my part, I am sure that * * * * * are worth more than ministerial friendship and gratitude; so I am inclined to think, that they are preferable to an office which would be procured with difficulty, enjoyed with constraint and expence, and lost, perhaps, next April, in the annual revolutions of our domestic Government. Again adieu.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lady Sheffield.

Lausanne, October 28th, 1783.

THE progress of my gout is in general so regular, and there is so much uniformity in the History of its Decline and Fall, that I have hitherto indulged my laziness, without much shame or remorse, without supposing that you would be very anxious for my safety, which has been sufficiently provided for by the triple care of my friend Deyverdun, my humbler friend Caplin, and a very conversable physician, (not the famous Tissot) whose ordinary fee is ten batz, about fifteen pence English. After the usual increase and decrease of the member (for it has been confined to the injured part) the gout has retired in good order, and the remains of weakness, which obliged me to move on the rugged pavement of Lausanne with a stick, or rather small crutch, are to be ascribed to the sprain, which might have been a much more serious business. As I have now spent a month at Lausanne, you will enquire with much curiosity, more kindness, and some mixture of spite and malignity, how far the place has answered my expectations, and whether I do not repent of a resolution which has appeared so rash and ridiculous to my ambitious friends? To this question, however natural and reasonable, I shall not return an immediate answer, for two reasons: 1. *I have not yet made a fair trial.* The disappointment and delay with regard to Deyverdun's house, will confine us this winter to lodgings, rather convenient than spacious or pleasant. I am only beginning to recover my strength and liberty, and to look about on persons and things; the greatest part of those persons are in the country taken up with their vintage; my books are not yet arrived, and, in short, I cannot look upon myself as settled in that comfortable way which you and I understand and relish. Yet the weather has been heavenly, and till this time, the end of October, we enjoy the brightness of the sun, and somewhat gently complain of its immoderate heat. 2. If I should be too sanguine in explaining my satisfaction in what I have done, you would ascribe that satisfaction to the novelty of the scene, and the inconstancy of man; and I deem it far more safe and prudent to postpone any positive declaration, till I am placed by experience beyond the danger of repentance and recantation. Yet of one thing I am sure, that I possess in this country, as well as in England, the best cordial of life, a sincere, tender, and sensible friend, adorned with the most valuable and pleasant qualities both of the heart and head. The interior enjoyments of leisure and society are likewise in my power; and in the short excursions which I have hitherto made, I have commenced or renewed my acquaintance with a certain number of persons, more especially women, (who, at least in France and this country, are undoubtedly superior to our prouder sex,) of rational minds and elegant manners. I breakfast alone, and have declared that I receive no visits in a morning, which you will easily suppose is devoted to study. I find it impossible, without inconvenience, to defer my dinner beyond two o'clock. We have got a very good woman cook. Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an Epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two to share our luxurious, but not extravagant repasts. The afternoons are (and will be much more so hereafter) devoted to society, and I shall find it necessary to play at cards much oftener than in London: but I do not dislike that way of passing a couple of hours, and I shall not be ruined at shilling whist. As yet I have not supped, but in the course of the winter I must sometimes sacrifice an evening abroad, and in exchange I hope sometimes to steal a day at home, without going into company * * *

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***. I have all this time been talking to Lord Sheffield; I hope that he has dispatched my affairs, and it would give me pleasure to hear that I am no longer member for Lymington, nor Lord of *Lenborough*. Adieu. I feel every day that the distance serves only to make me think with more tenderness of the persons whom I love.

LETTER CCXCIX.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, November 14th, 1783.

LAST Tuesday, November eleventh, after plaguing and vexing yourself all the morning, about some business of your fertile creation, you went to the House of Common, and passed the afternoon, the evening, and perhaps the night, without sleep or food, stifled in a close room by the heated respiration of six hundred politicians, inflamed by party passion, and tired of the repetition of dull nonsense, which, in that illustrious assembly, so far outweighs the proportion of reason and eloquence. On the same day, after a studious morning, a friendly dinner, and a cheerful assembly of both sexes, I retired to rest at eleven o'clock, satisfied with the past day, and certain that the next would afford me the return of the same quiet and rational enjoyments. *Which has the better bargain?* Seriously, I am every hour more grateful to my own judgment and resolution, and only regret that I so long delayed the execution of a favourite plan, which I am convinced is the best adapted to my character and inclinations. Your conjecture of the revolutions of my face, when I heard that the house was for this winter inaccessible, is probable, but false. I bore my disappointment with the temper of a sage, and only use it to render the prospect of next year still more pleasing to my imagination. You are likewise mistaken, in imputing my fall to the awkwardness of my limbs. The same accident might have happened to Slingsby himself, or to any *hero* of the age, the most distinguished for his *bodily activity*. I have now resumed my entire strength, and walk with caution, yet with speed and safety, through the streets of this mountainous city. After a month of the finest autumn I ever saw, the *bise* made me feel my old acquaintance; the weather is now milder, and this present day is dark and rainy, not much better than what you probably enjoy in England. The town is comparatively empty, but the Noblesse are returning every day from their chateaux, and I already perceive that I shall have more reason to complain of dissipation than of dulness. As I told Lady S. I am afraid of being too rash and hasty in expressing my satisfaction; but I must again repeat, that appearances are extremely favourable. I am sensible that general praise conveys no distinct ideas, but it is very difficult to enter into particulars where the individuals are unknown, or indifferent to our correspondent. You have forgotten the *old* generation, and in twenty years a new one is grown up. Death has swept many from the world, and chance or choice has brought many to this place. If you enquire after your acquaintance Catherine, you must be told, that she is solitary, ugly, blind, and universally forgotten. Your later flame, and our common goddess, the Eliza, passed a month at the inn. She came to consult Tissot, and was acquainted with Cerjat. And now to business. * * *

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With regard to meaner cases, these are two, which you can and will undertake. 1. As I have not renounced my country, I should be glad to hear of your parliamentary squabbles, which may be done with small trouble and expence. After an interesting debate, my Lady in due time may cut the speeches from Woodfall. You will write or dictate any curious anecdote, and the whole, inclosed in a letter, may be dispatched to Lausanne. 2. A set of Wedgewood china, which we talked of in London, and which would be most acceptable here. As you have a *sort* of a taste, I leave to your own choice the colour and the pattern; but as I have the inclination and means to live very handsomely *here*, I desire that the size and number of things may be adequate to a plentiful table. If you see Lord North, assure him of my gratitude; had he been a more successful friend, I should now be drudging at the Board of Customs, or vexed with business in the amiable society of ——. To Lord Loughborough present an affectionate sentiment; I am satisfied of his intention to serve me, if I had not been in such a fidget. I am sure you will not fail, while you are in town, to visit and comfort poor aunt Kitty. I wrote to her on my first arrival, and she may be assured that I will not neglect her. To my Lady I say nothing; we have now our private correspondence, into which the

the eye of an husband should not be permitted to intrude. I am really satisfied with the success of the pamphlet; not only because I have a sneaking kindness for the author, but as it shews me that plain sense, full information, and warm spirit, are still acceptable in the world. You talk of Lausanne as a place of retirement, yet, from the situation and freedom of the Pays de Vaud, all nations, and all extraordinary characters, are astonished to meet each other. The Abbé Raynal, the grand Gibbon, and Mercier, author of the *Tableau de Paris*, have been in the same room. The other day the Prince and Princess de Ligne, the Duke and Duchess d'Ursel, &c. came from Brussels on purpose (literally true) to act a comedy at * * * * * *, in the country. He was dying, and could not appear; but we had comedy, ball, and supper. The event seems to have revived him; for that great man is fallen from his ancient glory, and his nearest relations refuse to see him. I told you of poor Catherine's deplorable state; but Madame de Mesery, at the age of sixty-nine, is still handsome. Adieu.

LETTER CCC.

The same to the same.

Lausanne, December 20th, 1783.

I HAVE received both your epistles; and as any excuse will serve a man who is at the same time very busy and very idle, I patiently expected the second, before I entertained any thoughts of answering the first. * * * * *

service, perhaps as much as * * * * * himself. To you, in the confidence of friendship, and without either pride or resentment, I will fairly own that I am somewhat of Gerard's opinion; and if I did not compare it with the rest of his character, I should be astonished that * * * * * suffered me to depart, without even a civil answer to my letter. Were I capable of hating a man, whom it is not easy to hate, I should find myself amply revenged by * * * *. But the happy souls in paradise are susceptible only of love and pity, and though Lausanne is not a paradise, more especially in winter, I do assure you, in sober prose, that it has hitherto fulfilled, and even surpassed, my warmest expectations. Yet I often cast a look toward Sheffield-Place, where you now repose, if you can repose, during the Christmas recess. Embrace my Lady, the young Baroness, and the gentle Louisa, and insinuate to your silent consort, that separate letters require separate answers. Had I an air balloon, the great topic of modern conversation, I would call upon you till the meeting of parliament. *Vale.*

LETTER CCCI.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to Mrs. Porten.

Lausanne, December 27th, 1783.

Dear Madam,

The unfortunate are loud and loquacious in their complaints, but real happiness is content with its own silent enjoyment; and if that happiness is of a quiet uniform kind, we suffer days and weeks to elapse without communicating our sensations to a distant friend. By you, therefore, whose temper and understanding have extracted from human life on every occasion the best and most comfortable ingredients, my silence will always be interpreted as an evidence of content, and you would only be alarmed (the danger is not at hand) by the too frequent repetition of my letters. Perhaps I should have continued to slumber, I don't know how long, had I not been awakened by the anxiety which you express in your last letter. * * * * * * * *

From this base subject I ascend to one which more seriously and strongly engages your thoughts, the consideration of my health and happiness. And you will give me credit when I assure you with sincerity, that I have not repented a single moment of the step which I have taken, and that I only regret the not having executed the same design two, or five, or even ten years ago. By this time I might have returned independent and rich to my native country; I should have escaped many disagreeable events that have happened in the meanwhile, and I should have avoided the parliamentary life, which experience has proved to be neither suitable to my temper, nor conducive to my fortune. In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me, in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend; and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two persons so perfectly fitted to live together, were never formed by nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended, and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages, and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage, some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken, if the building be not solid and comfortable. One disappointment I have indeed experienced, and patiently supported. The family who were settled in Deyverdun's house started some unexpected difficulties, and will not leave it till the spring; so that you must not yet expect any poetical, or even historical, description of the beauties of my habitation. During the dull months of winter we are satisfied with a very comfortable apartment in the middle of the town, and even derive some advantage from this delay; as it gives us time to arrange some plans of alteration and furniture, which will embellish our future and more elegant dwelling. In this season I rise (not at four in the morning) but a little before eight; at nine, I am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone, in the English style, and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive

perceive no difference between Lausanne and Bentinck-street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies; we never approach each other's door without a previous message, or thrice knocking, and my apartment is already sacred and formidable to strangers. I dress at half past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled,) we sit down to dinner. We have hired a female cook, well skilled in her profession, and accustomed to the taste of every nation; as for instance, we had excellent mince-pies yesterday. After dinner, and the departure of our company, one, two, or three friends, we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and variety. Whist, at shillings or half crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese, and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life; it is impossible to communicate a perfect idea of the vital and substantial parts, the characters of the men and women with whom I have very easily connected myself in looser and closer bonds, according to their inclination and my own. If I do not deceive myself, and if Deyverdun does not flatter me, I am already a general favourite; and as our likings and dislikes are commonly mutual, I am equally satisfied with the freedom and elegance of manners, and (after proper allowances and exceptions) with the worthy and amiable qualities of many individuals. The autumn has been beautiful, and the winter hitherto mild, but in January we must expect some severe frost. Instead of rolling in a coach, I walk the streets, wrapped up in a fur cloak: but this exercise is wholesome, and except an accidental fit of the gout of a few days, I never enjoyed better health. I am no longer in Pavillard's house, where I was almost starved with cold and hunger, and you may be assured! now enjoy every benefit of comfort, plenty, and even decent luxury. You wish me happy; acknowledge that such a life is more conducive to happiness, than five nights in the week passed in the House of Commons, or five mornings spent at the Custom-house. Send me, in return, a fair account of your own situation in mind and body. I am satisfied your own good sense would have reconciled you to inevitable separation; but there never was a more suitable diversion than your visit to Sheffield-Place. Among the innumerable proofs of friendship which I have received from that family, there are none which affect me more sensibly than their kind civilities to you, though I am persuaded that they are at least as much on your account as on mine. At length Madame de * * * * * is delivered by her tyrant's death; her daughter, a valuable woman of this place, has made some enquiries, and though her own circumstances are narrow, she will not suffer her father's widow to be left totally destitute. I am glad you derived so much melancholy pleasure from the letters, yet had I known it, I should have withheld * * * * * *

LETTER CCCII.

Edward Gibbon, Esq. to the Right. Hon. Lord Sheffield.

Lausanne, July 30, 1788.
Wednesday, 3 o'clock.

I HAVE but a moment to say, before the departure of the post, that after a very pleasant journey I arrived here about half an hour ago; that I am as well arranged, as if I had never stirred from this place; and that dinner on the table is just announced. Severy I dropt at his country-house about two leagues off. I just saluted the family, who dine with me the day after to-morrow, and return to town for some days, I hope weeks, on my account. The son is an amiable and grateful youth; and even this journey has taught me to know and to love him still better. My satisfaction would be complete, had I not found a sad and serious alteration in poor Deyverdun: but thus our joys are chequered! I embrace all; and at this moment feel the last pang of our last parting at Tunbridge. Convey this letter or information, without delay, from Sheffield-Place to Bath. In a few days I shall write more amply to both places.

LETTER

LETTER CCCIII.

The same to the same.

Oct. 1, 1788.

After such an act of vigor as my first letter, composed, finished, and dispatched within half an hour after my landing, while the dinner was smoaking on the table, your knowledge of the animal must have taught you to expect a proportionable degree of relaxation; and you will be satisfied to hear, that, for many Wednesdays and Saturdays I have consumed more time than would have sufficed for the epistle, in devising reasons for procrastinating it to the next post. At this very moment I begin so very late, as I am just going to dress and dine in the country, that I can take only the benefit of the date, October the first, and must be content to seal and send my letter next Saturday.

LETTER CCCIV.

The same to the same.

October the 4th.

Saturday is now arrived, and I much doubt whether I shall have time to finish. I rose, as usual, about seven; but as I knew I should have so much time, you know it would have been ridiculous to begin any thing before breakfast. When I returned from my breakfast-room to the library, unluckily I found on the table some new and interesting books, which instantly caught my attention; and without injuring my correspondent, I could safely bestow a single hour to gratify my curiosity. Some things which I found in them insensibly led me to other books, and other enquiries; the morning has stolen away, and I shall be soon summoned to dress and dine with the two Severys, father and son, who are returned from the country on a disagreeable errand, an illness of Madame, from which she is however recovering. Such is the faithful picture of my mind and manners, and from a single day *disce omnes*. After having been so long chained to the oar, in a splendid galley indeed, I freely and fairly enjoy my liberty as I promised in my preface; range without control over the wide expanse of my library; converse, as my fancy prompts me, with poets and historians, philosophers and orators, of every age and language; and often indulge my meditations in the invention and arrangement of mighty works, which I shall probably never find time or application to execute. My garden, berceau, and pavilion, often varied the scene of my studies; the beautiful weather which we have enjoyed exhilarated my spirits, and I again tasted the wisdom and happiness of my retirement, till that happiness was interrupted by a very serious calamity, which took from me for above a fortnight all thoughts of study, of amusement, and even of correspondence. I mentioned in my first letter the uneasiness I felt at poor Deyverdun's declining health, how much the pleasure of my life was embittered by the sight of a suffering and languid friend. The joy of our meeting appeared at first to revive him; and, though not satisfied, I began to think, at least to hope, that he was every day gaining ground; when, alas! one morning I was suddenly recalled from my berceau to the house, with the dreadful intelligence of an apoplectic stroke; I found him senseless: the best assistance was instantly collected; and he had the aid of the genius and experience of Mr. Tissot, and of the assiduous care of another physician, who for some time scarcely quitted his bedside either night or day. While I was in momentary dread of a relapse, with a confession from his physicians that such a relapse must be fatal, you will feel that I was much more to be pitied than my friend. At length, art or nature triumphed over the enemy of life. I was soon assured that all immediate danger was past; and now for many days I have had the satisfaction of seeing him recover, though by slow degrees, his health and strength, his sleep and appetite. He now walks about the garden, and receives his particular friends, but has not yet gone abroad. His future health will depend very much upon his own prudence; but, at all events, this has been a very serious warning; and the slightest indisposition will hereafter assume a very formidable aspect. But let us turn from this melancholy subject.—The Man of the People escaped from the tumult, the bloody tumult of the Westminster election, to the lakes and mountains of Switzerland, and

and I was informed that he was arrived at the Lyon d'Or. I sent a compliment; he answered it in person, and settled at my house for the remainder of the day. I have eat and drank, and conversed and sat up all night with Fox in England; but it never has happened, perhaps it never can happen again, that I should enjoy him as I did that day, alone, from ten in the morning till ten at night. Poor Deyverdun, before his accident, wanted spirits to appear, and has regretted it since. Our conversation never flagged a moment; and he seemed thoroughly pleased with the place and with his company. We had little politics; though he gave me, in a few words, such a character of Pitt, as one great man should give of another his rival: much of books, from my own, on which he flattered very pleasantly, to Homer and the Arabian Nights: much about the country, my garden (which he understands far better than I do), and, upon the whole, I think he envies me, and would do so were he minister. The next morning I gave him a guide to walk him about the town and country, and invited some company to meet him at dinner. The following day he continued his journey to Bern and Zurich, and I have heard of him by various means. The people gaze on him as a prodigy, but he shews little inclination to converse with them, &c. &c. &c. Our friend *Douglas* has been curious, attentive, agreeable; and in every place where he resided some days, he has left acquaintance who esteem and regret him: I never knew so clear and general an impression.

After this long letter I have many things to say, though none of any pressing consequence. I hope you are not idle in the deliverance of Beriton, though the late events and edicts of France begin to reconcile me to the possession of dirty acres. What think you of Necker and the States Generales? Are not the public expectations too sanguine? Adieu. I will write soon to my lady separately, though I have not any particular subject for her ear. Ever yours.

LETTER CCCV.

The same to the same.

Lausanne, August, 1789.

After receiving and dispatching the power of attorney, last Wednesday, I opened, with some palpitation, the unexpected missive which arrived this morning. The perusal of the contents spoiled my breakfast. They are disagreeable in themselves, alarming in their consequences, and peculiarly unpleasant at the present moment, when I hoped to have formed and completed the arrangements of my future life. I do not perfectly understand what are these deeds which are so inflexibly required; the wills and marriage-settlements I have sufficiently answered. But your arguments do not convince ****, and I have very little hope from the Lenborough search. What will be the event? If his objections are only the result of legal scrupulosity, surely they might be removed, and every chink might be filled, by a general bond of indemnity, in which I boldly ask you to join, as it will be a substantial important act of friendship, without any possible risk to yourself or your successors. Should he still remain obdurate, I must believe what I already suspect, that **** repents of his purchase, and wishes to elude the conclusion. Our case would then be hopeless, *ibi omnis effusus labor*, and the estate would be returned on our hands with the taint of a bad title. The refusal of mortgage does not please me; but surely our offer shews some confidence in the goodness of my title. If he will not take eight thousand pounds at *four per cent.* we must look out elsewhere; new doubts and delays will arise, and I am persuaded that you will not place an implicit confidence in any attorney. I know not as yet your opinion about my Lausanne purchase. If you are against it, the present position of affairs gives you great advantage, &c. &c. The Severys are all well; an uncommon circumstance for the four persons of the family at once. They are now at Mex, a country-house six miles from hence, which I visit to-morrow for two or three days. They often come to town, and we shall contrive to pass a part

part of the autumn together at Rolle. I want to change the scene; and beautiful as the garden and prospect must appear to every eye, I feel that the state of my own mind casts a gloom over them; every spot, every walk, every bench, recals the memory of those hours, of those conversations, which will return no more. But I tear myself from the subject. I could not help writing to-day, though I do not find I have said any thing very material. As you must be conscious that you have agitated me, you will not postpone any agreeable, or even *decisive* intelligence. I almost hesitate, whether I shall run over to England, to consult with you on the spot, and to fly from poor Deyverdun's shade, which meets me at every turn. I did not expect to have felt his loss so sharply. But six hundred miles! Why are we so far off?

Once more, What is the difficulty of the title? Will men of sense, in a sensible country, never get rid of the tyranny of lawyers? more oppressive and ridiculous than even the old yoke of the clergy. Is not a term of seventy or eighty years, nearly twenty in my own person, sufficient to prove our legal possession? Will not the records of fines and recoveries attest that *I* am free from any bar of entails and settlements? Consult some sage of the law, whether their present demand be necessary and legal. If your ground be firm, force them to execute the agreement or forfeit the deposit. But if, as I much fear, they have a right, and a wish, to elude the consummation, would it not be better to release them at once, than to be hung up for five years, as in the case of Lovegrove, which cost me in the end four or five thousand pounds? You are bold, you are wise; consult, resolve, act. In my penultimate letter I dropped a strange hint, that a migration homeward was not impossible. I know not what to say; my mind is all afloat; yet you will not reproach me with caprice or inconstancy. How many years did you damn my scheme of retiring to Lausanne! I executed that plan; I found as much happiness as is compatible with human nature, and during four years (1783—1787) I never breathed a sigh of repentance. On my return from England the scene was changed: I found only a faint semblance of Deyverdun, and that semblance was each day fading from my sight. I have passed an anxious year, but my anxiety is now at an end, and the prospect before me is a melancholy solitude. I am still deeply rooted in this country; the possession of this paradise, the friendship of the Severys, a mode of society suited to my taste, and the enormous trouble and *expence* of a migration. Yet in England (when the present clouds are dispelled) I could form a very comfortable establishment in London, or rather at Bath; and I have a very noble country-seat at about ten miles from East Grinstead in Sussex. That spot is dearer to me than the rest of the three kingdoms; and I have sometimes wondered how two men, so opposite in their tempers and pursuits, should have imbibed so long and lively a propensity for each other. Sir Stanier Porten is just dead. He has left his widow with a moderate pension, and two children, my nearest relations: the eldest, Charlotte, is about Louisa's age, and also a most amiable sensible young creature. I have conceived a romantic idea of educating and adopting her; as we descend into the vale of years our infirmities require some domestic female society: Charlotte would be the comfort of my age, and I could reward her care and tenderness with a decent fortune. A thousand difficulties oppose the execution of the plan, which I have never opened but to you; yet it would be less impracticable in England than in Switzerland. Adieu. I am wounded; pour some oil into my wounds: yet I am less unhappy since I have thrown my mind upon paper.

Are you not amazed at the French revolution? They have the power, will they have the moderation, to establish a good constitution? Adieu, ever yours.

LETTER CCCVI.

The same to the same.

Lausanne, December 15th, 1789.

You have often reason to accuse my strange silence and neglect in the most important of *my own* affairs; for I will presume to assert, that in a business of yours of equal consequence, you should not find me cold or careless. But on the present occasion my silence is, perhaps, the highest compliment I ever paid you. You remember the answer

swer of Philip of Macedon: "Philip "may sleep, while he knows that Par- "menio is awake." I expected, and, to say the truth, I wished that my Parmenio would have decided and acted, without expecting my dilatory answer, and in his decision I should have acquiesced with implicit confidence. But since you will have my opinion, let us consider the present state of my affairs. In the course of my life I have often known, and sometimes felt, the difficulty of getting money, but I now find myself involved in a more singular distress, the difficulty of placing it, and if it continues much longer, I shall almost wish for my land again.

I perfectly agree with you, that it is bad management to purchase in the funds when they do not yield four pounds *per cent.* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Some of this money I can place safely, by means of my banker here; and I shall possess, what I have always desired, a command of cash, which I cannot abuse to my prejudice, since I have it in my power to supply with my pen any extraordinary or fanciful indulgence of expence. And so much, much indeed, for pecuniary matters. What would you have me say of the affairs of France? We are too near, and too remote, to form an accurate judgment of that wonderful scene. The abuses of the court and government called aloud for reformation; and it has happened, as it will always happen, that an innocent well-disposed prince has paid the forfeit of the sins of his predecessors; of the ambition of Lewis the Fourteenth, of the profusion of Lewis the Fifteenth. The French nation had a glorious opportunity, but they have abused, and may lose their advantages. If they had been content with a liberal translation of our system, if they had respected the prerogatives of the crown, and the privileges of the nobles, they might have raised a solid fabric on the only true foundation, the natural aristocracy of a free country. How different is the prospect! Their king brought a captive to Paris, after his palace had been stained by the blood of his guards; the nobles in exile; the clergy plundered in a way which strikes at the root of all property; the capital an independent republic; the union of the provinces dissolved; the flames of discord kindled by the worst of men; (in that light I consider Mirabeau;) and the honestest of the assembly, a set of wild visionaries, (like our Dr. Price,) who gravely debate, and dream about the establishment of a pure and perfect democracy of five-and-twenty millions, the virtues of the golden age, and the primitive rights and equality of mankind, which would lead, in fair reasoning, to an equal partition of lands and money. How many years must elapse before France can recover any vigour, or resume her station among the powers of Europe! As yet, there is no symptom of a great man, a Richlieu or a Cromwell, arising, either to restore the monarchy, or to lead the commonwealth. The weight of Paris, more deeply engaged in the funds than *all* the rest of the kingdom, will long delay a bankruptcy; and if it should happen, it will be, both in the cause and the effect, a measure of weakness, rather than of strength. You send me to Chamberry, to see a prince and an archbishop. Alas! we have exiles enough here, with the Marshal de Castries and the Duke de Guignes at their head; and this inundation of strangers, which used to be confined to the summer, will now stagnate all the winter. The only ones whom I have seen with pleasure are Mr. Mounier, the late president of the national assembly, and the Count de Lally; they have both dined with me. Mounier, who is a serious dry politician, is returned to Dauphine. Lally is an amiable man of the world, and a poet: he passes the winter here. You know how much I prefer a quiet select society to a crowd of names and titles, and that I always seek conversation with a view to amusement, rather than information. What happy countries are England and Switzerland, if they know and preserve their happiness.

I have a thousand things to say to my Lady, Maria, and Louisa, but I can add only a short postscript about the Madeira. Good Madeira is now become essential to my health and reputation. May your hogshead prove as good as the last; may it not be intercepted by the rebels or the Austrians. What a scene again in that country! Happy England! Happy Switzerland! I again repeat, adieu.

LETTER

LETTER CCCVII.

The same to the same.

Lausanne, April 27, 1793.

My dearest friend, for such you most truly are, nor does there exist a person who obtains, or shall ever obtain, a superior place in my esteem and affection.

After too long a silence I was sitting down to write, when, only yesterday morning (such is now the irregular slowness of the English post), I was suddenly struck, indeed struck to the heart, by the fatal intelligence* from Sir Henry Clinton and Mr. de Lally. Alas! what is life, and what are our hopes and projects! When I embraced her at your departure from Lausanne, could I imagine that it was for the last time? when I postponed to another summer my journey to England, could I apprehend that I never, never should see her again? I always hoped that she would spin her feeble thread to a long duration, and that her delicate frame would survive (as is often the case) many constitutions of a stouter appearance. In four days! in your absence, in that of her children! But she is now at rest; and if there be a future life, her mild virtues have surely entitled her to the reward of pure and perfect felicity. It is for you that I feel, and I can judge of your sentiments by comparing them with my own. I have lost, it is true, an amiable and affectionate friend, whom I had known and loved above three-and-twenty years, and whom I often styled by the endearing name of sister. But you are deprived of the companion of your life, the wife of your choice, and the mother of your children; poor children! the liveliness of Maria, and the softness of Louisa, render them almost equally the objects of my tenderest compassion. I do not wish to aggravate your grief; but, in the sincerity of friendship, I cannot hold a different language. I know the impotence of reason, and I much fear that the strength of your character will serve to make a sharper and more lasting impression.

The only consolation in these melancholy trials to which human life is exposed, the only one at least in which I have any confidence, is the presence of a real friend; and of that, as far as it depends on myself, you shall not be destitute. I regret the few days that must be lost in some necessary preparation; but I trust that to-morrow se'nnight (May the fifth) I shall be able to set forwards on my journey to England; and when this letter reaches you, I shall be considerably advanced on my way. As it is yet prudent to keep at a respectful distance from the banks of the French Rhine, I shall incline a little to the right, and proceed by Schaffouse and Stutgard to Frankfort and Cologne: the Austrian Netherlands are now open and safe, and I am sure of being able at least to pass from Ostend to Dover; whence, without passing through London, I shall pursue the direct road to Sheffield-Place. Unless I should meet with some unforeseen accidents and delays, I hope, before the end of the month to share your solitude, and sympathize with your grief. All the difficulties of the journey, which my indolence had probably magnified, have now disappeared before a stronger passion; and you will not be sorry to hear, that, as far as Frankfort to Cologne, I shall enjoy the advantage of the society, the conversation, the German language, and the active assistance of Severy. His attachment to me is the sole motive which prompts him to undertake this troublesome journey; and as soon as he has seen me over the roughest ground, he will immediately return to Lausanne. The poor young man loved Lady S. as a mother, and the whole family is deeply affected by an event which reminds them too painfully of their own misfortune. Adieu. I could write volumes, and shall therefore break off abruptly. I shall write on the road, and hope to find a few lines *à poste restante* at Frankfort and Brussels. Adieu; ever yours.

* The death of Lady Sheffield.

THE END.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey.

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